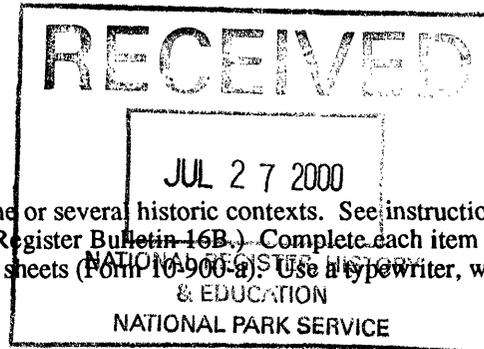


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.



New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Downtown Perry, Iowa.

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

- I. Building Downtown, circa 1880-circa 1948
- II. Transportation, circa 1880-circa 1948
- III. Commercial Architectural Resources, circa 1880-circa 1948

C. Form Prepared By

name/title William C. Page, Public Historian; Joanne R. Page, Project Associate

organization Perry Historic Preservation Commission date April 30, 1998

street & number 520 East Sheridan Avenue (Page) telephone 515-243-5740

city or town Des Moines state IA zip code 50313-5017

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Faticia Oriskin OS/PPD 7-18-00
Signature and title of certifying official Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA
State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Ronda McClelland 9/08/00
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number E Page 1

CFN-259-1116

Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

I. Building Downtown

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

(If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The history of downtown Perry can be understood through the study of three historic contexts. This report discusses each of those themes. The discussion begins with an introduction to the broad local trends and demographics and continues with a discussion of each of the following contexts:

- I. Building Downtown
- II. Transportation
- III. Commercial Architectural Resources

Perry is located in the north-central portion of Dallas County and is its largest city. Dallas County is situated within the watersheds of the Middle Raccoon River, the North Raccoon River, and the Des Moines River, which flows diagonally northwest to southeast across the county. The political boundaries of Dallas County were established in 1847 when it became evident that westward settlement was imminent. The earliest settlements clustered in the southeast portions of the county (Andreas:475) and consisted of individuals and families migrating into Iowa in search of good farming land. The town of Adel, first known as Panouch, became the Dallas County seat in 1847 and remains so today.

Perry, which was first platted in 1868, owes its early growth to its location within a rich agricultural area, to its railroad lines, and to the drive and labor of its citizenry. The community grew as a market center to provide products and services to the surrounding countryside, as well as to smaller communities, such as Minburn, Dawson, Bouton, Berkley, Gardiner, and the coal mining community of Angus. This growth was aided by the Rock Island and the Milwaukee railroads, which ran through Perry.

As can be seen in the table on the following page, the population of Dallas County experienced a great immigration in the decades between 1860 and 1880. Advent of the railroads undoubtedly facilitated this growth.

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

I. Building Downtown

Population Statistics

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Perry*</u> | <u>Dallas County#</u> | <u>Adel*</u> |
|-------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1850 | 0 | 854 | |
| 1860 | 0 | 5,244 | 466 |
| 1870 | 0 | 12,019 | 711 |
| 1880 | 952 | 18,746 | 989 |
| 1890 | 2,880 | 20,479 | 995 |
| 1900 | 3,986 | 23,058 | 1,213 |
| 1910 | 4,630 | 23,628 | 1,289 |
| 1920 | 5,642 | 25,120 | 1,455 |
| 1930 | 5,881 | 25,493 | 1,669 |
| 1940 | 5,977 | 24,649 | 1,740 |
| 1950 | 6,174 | 23,661 | 1,799 |
| 1960 | 6,442 | 24,123 | 2,060 |
| 1970 | 6,906 | 26,085 | 2,419 |
| 1980 | 7,053 | 29,513 | 2,846 |
| 1990 | 6,652 | 29,755 | 3,304 |

Sources: * Goudy 1994
 # Goudy & Burke 1994

At all times, the agricultural community has played a critical role in the development of Perry. The railroads have provided another major stimulus. Manufacturing and food processing have also boosted the local economy, in addition to commercial and professional activities commensurate with a rural market center.

Although many rural towns in Iowa have declined in population since World War II, it can be concluded that Perry's population has remained relatively stable. The city retains its small-town character and continues to provide commercial and agricultural services and products to its surrounding market area. The presence of several large industries in Perry provide employment opportunities for residents. A number of people choose to live in Perry and commute to the Des Moines metropolitan area for jobs. The recent completion of a divided highway between Perry and the metropolitan area facilitates these practices and encourages tourism in Perry.

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

I. Building Downtown

I. BUILDING DOWNTOWN

INTRODUCTION

As is well known, those who platted the town of Perry expected First Street to be the business street and made it 100 feet wide while Second Street was left only 70 feet for the residence lots platted. *Perry Daily Chief*, December 1, 1898)

This expression of knowledge, commonly held by Perry's late Victorians, holds an important key in understanding the evolution of downtown Perry. Contrary to expectations, Second Street became "Main Street" rather than First. The story of this evolution, as well as Perry's subsequent history as an Iowa boomtown, is significant because it shows how historical forces transformed the community's development.

For the purpose of analysis and evaluation, this story can be understood within the following contexts:

Downtown Perry Evolves
Strong Local Economy
Boomtown
Fire! Fire! Fire!
Other Downtown Establishments

Each of these topics is discussed below, following some background comments.

BACKGROUND

Town building in Perry illustrates the community's growth influenced by the topography of the city's physical setting; the town's original plat; railroad rights-of-way; laissez faire economics and real estate practices; and traditional town building patterns in the United States.

Founding of Perry

Perry was originally laid out and platted as a town in 1868 by two brothers, Harvey Willis and John Willis. They were privy to information that the Des Moines Valley Rail Road wished to extend the recently constructed Des Moines Valley Railroad to Fort Dodge, Iowa. Believing that a paper town along the line had good prospects to develop into a real community with valuable property, Harvey Willis aggressively

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

I. Building Downtown

pursued efforts to induce the road to transverse the brothers' land. Willis succeeded in these efforts, acquiescing to railroad officials' stipulations that Willis grant the road five acres of land and 32 lots in the new town of "Perry," named after Colonel Perry, a railroad official from Keokuk, Iowa. This road subsequently became the Des Moines and Fort Dodge line.

The Brothers Willis laid out a plat that straddled land owned by each of them. Willis Avenue was the dividing line between each of their farms (Hastie 1962:35). These brothers were members of the Society of Friends and shared this religious affiliation with a number of other early settlers in Dallas County, including Judge Henry Thornburg, the most prominent among them (*Ibid.*:21-23). Train service to Perry began on Independence Day 1869. (*Ibid.*:43-46). The arrival of this transportation route ensured the growth and development of Perry. Already by 1878, for example, 981 railroad carloads of agricultural products were exported from Perry. (*Ibid.*:46)

Physical Characteristics

Perry's topography and physical setting affected the community's upbuilding. From its beginnings, much of the town was located upon low and swampy ground (*Ibid.*:47). Although the entire community is situated on generally level land, the southern portion of Perry is located on somewhat lower land. The higher land to the north emerged during town building in Perry as preferable for residential use. Although the Brothers Willis fulfilled their promise to deed 32 acres of land to the railroad, this land was less desirable than that which they retained.

Original Town Plat

Perry's original town plat initially provided the framework for downtown development. This 1868 plan continues to influence the evolution of downtown Perry today.

The original town plat was of irregular shape. (See Figure 1-a.) Its boundaries were the city blocks facing Estella Street on the south and city blocks facing Edna Street on the north. The east and west boundaries were slightly irregular. A series of city blocks adjacent to West 4th Street and a series of city blocks adjacent to 7th Street provided, respectively, the west and east boundaries. The remaining west and east boundaries were provided by West 3rd and 6th Streets.

In spite of its slightly irregular shaped, the original town plat was laid as a grid of city streets and blocks oriented to the cardinal points of the compass. Almost all of the north-south streets and all of the east-west streets conformed to this grid.

First Avenue (originally platted as 1st Street) formed a dividing line between numerically named north-south streets. Those streets laid out to the west of First were sequentially named West 2nd Street, West 3rd Street, etc. Those streets laid out to the east of First were sequentially named by numbers without a

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

I. Building Downtown

directional prefix--2nd Street, 3rd Street, etc. Each of these north-south streets ran the entire length of the plat with the exception of 1st and 2nd Streets, where the diagonal platting of several city blocks south of Willis Avenue blocked them. Railroad Street was laid out along this diagonal to carry traffic to the southern reaches of the plat.

The east-west streets were given proper names to distinguish them from the numerically named north-south streets. Some of these streets were named after the daughters of the original town proprietors. They include Edna, Lucinda, Evelyn, and Estella. Other proper names were chosen to honor local personages. They include Otley, Pattee, Bateman, Rawson, and Warford. The name Willis reflects the family name of Perry's original proprietors. Each of the original plat's east-west streets ran the entire breadth of the plat except Evelyn Street, which was blocked by the diagonal platting discussed above.

The most distinguishing characteristic of Perry's original town plat was the diagonal swath imposed by the Des Moines & Fort Dodge Railroad right-of-way across its western edge. The railroad's right-of-way bisected a number of city blocks in this area. The plat also included land for depot grounds located at its heart. The width of this strip of land, located between Estella Street on the south and Warford Street on the north, was such that the swath could not be contained within the confines of the standard size of Perry's city blocks. For this reason, land situated adjacent to the depot grounds was platted in a series of irregularly-shaped blocks.

The geometry of these blocks created a small, triangularly-shaped parcel of land, located near the depot grounds. This parcel quickly became the town center for Perry. Over the years, it has been variously called the Triangle, the "town square," or simply "the square." During the 1870s, the latter was apparently the more commonly used name.. For example, D W Payne's general stock store was described as located on the "east side of square." (Union:464)

One historian has noted that:

From the earliest times Perry had a unique Triangle instead of the customary town square. This was enclosed with a large log chain run through holes in the tops of large posts. This served admirably for a hitching place during the horse and buggy days. A great variety of such carts, buggies, lumber wagons, spring wagons, bob-sleds, cutter and carriage, or simply a riding horse. Sometimes a load of loose hay could be seen as some farmer had hoped to find a buyer at a livery barn, or to any of many people who kept horses or cows. (Hastie 1962:49)

This parcel was deeded to the public by J. H. Willis and his wife in 1899. (Wood:168) In 1904, the Triangle became the site of the Perry Carnegie Library. It continues to form the center of the community today.

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

I. Building Downtown

All of this activity took place in Perry during the period of economic laissez faire in the United States (throughout most of the Nineteenth and into early Twentieth Centuries). During this era, real estate interests enjoyed great liberty in developing land. Speculation often occurred in the rapid increase of the country's population and urbanization. Unregulated and irregular growth accompanied much of this commercially-driven development. Downtown Perry provides a case study of laissez faire town design. The irregularity of the city's plats--some laid out with city lots facing north and south, others laid out with city lots facing east and west--is an higgledy-piggledy arrangement of city streets, blocks, and lots. Downtown Perry is particularly irregular in design. (See Figure I-b.) As discussed above, the diagonal corridor of the railroad injected a strong physical presence within this plat. Many otherwise regularly-shaped city blocks were bisected or truncated. Some, like Blocks 18, 24, 33, and 34 were irregularly shaped to tailor the depot grounds with the surrounding regularly platted city blocks. Downtown Perry's alley system also reflects an irregular design. The portion of the original plat south of Willis Avenue is a good case in point. In addition to this, the alley system in the southern portion of the original plat also lacked the uniformity of its design in the north portion. About one half the city blocks in the southern portion contain alleys running east and west, while the other half contains alleys running north and south.

Railroad Corridors

An important factor in town building in Perry has been the location of railroad corridors. Both the Rock Island and the Milwaukee railroads geographically divided the community. These lines run through or near the town's center rather than edging it. This affected land use in the community. The location of the railroads predetermined sites for light and heavy industries, as well as wholesale and retail operations dealing with bulk goods such as lumber (which were shipped into Perry) and agricultural products such as hogs, corn, cattle, and butter and eggs (which were shipped out). Naturally, these businesses developed along the railroad tracks. In other cases, the railroad corridors formed land use boundaries. For example, the Milwaukee's tracks demarcated the northern extent of downtown Perry. Merchants did not want to be separated from the heart of the downtown by the railroad tracks, so few located to the north of them.

DOWNTOWN PERRY EVOLVES

As Perry's economy grew during the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries, commercial activity in downtown Perry expanded to provide retail and wholesale products locally and to the surrounding rural countryside. Much of this commercial expansion occurred along 2nd Street north from Willis Avenue. Some occurred south of Otley Avenue. Redevelopment also occurred within the core area of the downtown. Location played a key role in the selection of sites for new construction. All of this development aimed toward the highest and best use of commercial land in a period of rapid economic expansion and prosperity in Perry.

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

I. Building Downtown

Emergence of 2nd Street

As Perry grew, 2nd Street emerged as a principal commercial corridor. (See Figure I-d.) Perry's original proprietors had intended First Avenue--as its name implies and its platted 100 foot width facilitated--the community's principal north-south corridor. That occurred for transportation purposes, but it did not for commercial development. First Avenue became the north-south overland route to-and-from Perry because it was laid out along a line dividing Section 9 and Section 10 in Spring Valley Township and county roads were frequently developed on such lines as established by the U.S. Government's land survey system. But First Avenue did not become the Perry's principal commercial corridor. Why did downtown Perry evolve along 2nd Street instead of First Avenue?

The answer to this question lies in entrepreneurial decisions about strategic commercial locations in Perry. A combination of elements influenced these decisions: Willis Avenue, the Triangle, 2nd Street, and the locations of Perry's railroad depots.

Perry's original town plat had preordained Willis Avenue, as with First Avenue, as a main street in the community. The Willis name was given as a testament for the original proprietors of the town. Willis Avenue quickly became the backbone of commerce in early Perry. As along First Avenue, the configuration of building lots and alleys in the city blocks on the north side of Willis Avenue conferred special commercial importance to this section of the community. Blocks 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 78, and 79 are bisected by east-west alleys. This arrangement of alleys is in contradistinction from most of the remaining town plat, where the alleys run north-and-south. The configuration of alleys parallel to Willis allowed building lots to front Willis Avenue. These parcels were platted as commercial lots, smaller in size than those in the residential sections of the community. (See Figure I-b.)

(It should be noted that alleys also run east-to-west along Otley Avenue and Evelyn Street. The fact that the building lots adjacent to these streets are residential-sized indicates their intended original function.)

The commercial importance of Willis Avenue was reaffirmed early in the development of Perry's downtown. According to one local historian:

At first Railroad street continued straight on to First Avenue, but was soon changed as it is now. Willis Avenue and Otley Avenue were given a 100 foot width instead of the customary 70 feet width. This accounts for the difference in width at Eight street. This arrangement left a small triangular piece down town, which at once began to be called The Triangle. This small piece was donated to the town by John Willis. (Hastie 1962:44)

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I. Building Downtown

The truncation of Railroad Street at Willis Avenue reinforced the growing importance of Willis as a commercial corridor because it created additional parcels of land in Block 34 for commercial development.

The Triangle also played a key role in entrepreneurial decisions about strategic commercial locations in Perry. According to one account:

The first brick building in Perry was built by George and Sidney Pease in 1875, and was just east of the Triangle. They opened a grocery store on the first floor and rented the upstairs for living quarters. This building with new front and remolded, is now occupied by the Northup Studio. (Hastie 1962:49)

The fact that George and Sidney Pease chose to locate their substantial and new improvement near the Triangle underlines its influence as a strategic commercial site.

By the 1890s, 2nd Street had emerged as another key corridor in Perry's downtown. The Citizens State Bank--"conceded to be the finest building in the city and is a model of beauty and convenience," according to one county history--was constructed in 1894 at 1124 2nd Street. The International Order of Odd Fellows building, located at 1012 2nd Street, was built in 1895. Allen Breed, a Perry banker, erected a series of notable commercial blocks on the east side the 1200 block of 2nd Street. The construction of these edifices illustrate the northward march of commerce along 2nd Street in the late Nineteenth Century.

The construction of the Milwaukee Railroad's passenger depot and freight yards near the intersection of 2nd and Bateman Streets stimulated much of that northward march. (See Figure I-b.) Merchants wished to locate along this highly trafficked street.

Downtown Sectors

Commercial expansion in Perry was such that, by the 1920s, three sectors had emerged in Perry's downtown--the Triangle, the 2nd Street spine, and the area south of Otley Avenue.

The Triangle area clustered around the city's municipal park and the Perry Carnegie Library. (See Figure I-c.) This sector's close proximity to the railroad stimulated enterprises directly related to transportation. It housed retail businesses, which dealt in heavy goods, like farm machinery, harness equipment, cemetery monuments, and agricultural feed, which could be brought in on the railroad, as well as automobile services and hardware. This sector also included the commercial businesses along the north side of Willis Avenue, like the Hotel Pattee. The diagonal layout of the railroad predetermined an irregularity of streets, city blocks, and building lots in this sector. Railroad Street, for example, runs diagonally northwest to southeast through this sector and actually bisects the intersection of Otley Avenue and 2nd Street. This

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

I. Building Downtown

configuration resulted in complicated patterns of street corners, city blocks, building lots, and vehicular traffic, which are shared with the south of Otley Avenue area.

Another sector of the downtown was situated along 2nd Street north of Willis Avenue. (See Figure 1-d.) Retails stores, banks and professional offices, and vaudeville and movie houses flourished there.

A third commercial sector in downtown Perry--called in this report "South of Otley Avenue"--grew between Otley Avenue on the north, Estella Street on the south, Railroad Street on the east, and the M.&St.L. tracks on the west. (See Figure 1-e.) The irregularity of its northern boundary is discussed above. This area emerged because of its proximity to the railroad but later than the other two downtown areas. Mixed land use has characterized the area south of Otley. For example, in 1933, Phillip's Petroleum Company and Sinclair Refining Company maintained facilities in this area. Other types of businesses related to the automobile also located there. In 1933, for example, they included a filling station, a used auto sales operation, a garage with the capacity of 110 cars, an auto painting establishment, an auto wrecking business, and several bulk oil stations. Light industrial operations also located in this area, such as Hutchinson Ice Cream Company, as well as a produce business. Located on the fringe of the downtown, this area did not attract drop-in shopping. Each of these businesses listed above was a destination stop for patrons. This area did provide a convenient location for automobile service. Patrons could leave their cars there, and then shop or walk to work downtown.

Other historical precedents can also be cited to show how the south of Otley Avenue area has been historically distinct from other areas of the downtown. When the City of Perry established fire limits for the downtown district in the early Twentieth Century, the city drew the southern boundary at Otley Avenue, excluding the south of Otley Avenue area from these restrictions. (See Figure 1-f.) When the City of Perry enacted zoning, the south of Otley area was zoned light industrial, another indication of its status as distinct from the other areas of the downtown.

Location, Location, Location

Location played a major role in the selection of sites for new construction In Perry, these decisions usually reflected standard patterns of town building in other parts of Iowa and the nation, but sometimes they were prompted by specific local situations.

The selection of corner lots for the construction of commercial buildings constituted a standard pattern in Victorian town building. This practice was widely observed in Perry. Numerous buildings illustrate how corner lots conferred visual prominence on the buildings they housed. Examples include those listed on the following page:

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

I. Building Downtown

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Citizens State Bank | 1124 2nd Street |
| A. L. Brown Block | 1024 2nd Street |
| Security Savings Bank | 1100-1102 Willis Avenue |
| L. D. Gamble Block | 1201-1203 2nd Street |
| Rex Theatre | 1300 2nd Street |

Each of these is a two- or three-story building, and each conveys a substantial visual impression because of its size and corner siting.

As Perry's population and economy boomed in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries, downtown Perry changed in a big way. One-story buildings were demolished and two-story buildings rose in their place. Two-story buildings were demolished and three-story buildings rose in their place. The Triangle area was rebuilt with a series of three-story buildings: the Security Savings Bank at 1100-1102 Willis Avenue, the Brown Block at 1024 2nd Street, and the Hotel Pattee at 1108-1116 Willis Avenue. The 1200 block of 2nd Street was improved with another series of three-story buildings: the L. D. Gamble Block at 1201 2nd Street, the B. & P. Order of Elks Building at 1211 2nd Street, and the huge Breed Block at 1202-1216 2nd Street. One sees in the choice of locations for these big, new commercial edifices which sites entrepreneurs valued as commercially strategic in Perry. Their selection of sites reaffirmed the desirability of 2nd Street, of its intersection with Warford, and of the Triangle area as choice locations.

The choice of location for a new building could stem, at least in part, from other reasons as well. For example:

The magnificent Pattee Hotel was built by Harry and Will Pattee as a memorial to their father, David Pattee, who had died the year before. It was on or near the site where Mr. Pattee had his first store when Perry was begun. (Hastie 1962:164)

Family sentiment clearly played a role in the siting of this hotel. While it cannot be denied that its location was convenient to the Triangle, it was not equidistant from both of the city's railroad depots.

STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY

The strength of Perry's economy and the health of its downtown rested on three economic pillars. As the home of several manufacturing concerns, Perry residents enjoyed the employment opportunities offered by these firms. The railroads added another component to the diversity of Perry's economy. (This subject is discussed below in Chapter II.) At all times, the city's agricultural hinterland has required retail goods and services.

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

I. Building Downtown

Manufacturing

During the late Nineteenth Century, a number of small manufacturing enterprises developed in Perry. These firms manufactured products mostly for sale and use by the local population with their focus on agricultural livelihoods. These industries included the manufacturing of carriages, wagons, spring beds, and animal harnesses, and several food processing industries, including a creamery, bottling plant, and canning factory (Hastie 1962:186). Some of these firms, such as the National Wood Works (a maker of door and window frames), reached broader markets. By and large, these business produced goods on a small scale.

During the early decades of the Twentieth Century, new and bigger industries appeared in Perry and reached much larger scale. In 1907, for example the Van Camp Company of Indianapolis, Indiana, decided to located a new milk condensory plant in Iowa, as a result of a booster campaign launched by the Commercial Club of Perry. This new industry began operations in 1908 and encouraged local farmers to increase their output of milk. (Later, this plant was taken over by Perry Milk Products and the Waterloo Creamery Company of Omaha. Now the plant is owned by the Meadow Gold company but is closing after the date of writing.)

Meat processing also became an important industry in Perry during the early years of the Twentieth Century. First established in 1919 and undergoing several management changes, the Perry Packing Company emerged by the 1920s as an important local industry. In 1927, the firm employed 55 laborers and 11 salesmen with a total payroll of \$95,000 (Hastie:189). This firm offered a wide line of food products, including cheese, butter, oysters, fish, horseradish, and canned goods (*Ibid.*) This firm felt the pinch of the Great Depression. It was purchased by Chicago interests in 1934 and became a subsidiary of Swift & Company in 1936. This plant was closed in 1956. Subsequently, IBP, Inc. purchased the property, expanded it, and operates from the site today.

In 1931 the Des Moines Valley Produce Company established a poultry and egg wholesaling operation in Perry. This company prospered and became important for the local economy. Hastie has described this business:

A fleet of five trucks handle the business between the various plants. Eviscerated chickens were prepared and individually wrapped in cellophane, sometimes as many as 6,500 a day. During the war period [World War II] as much as seven million pounds of eggs were broken and sent to their drying plant at Manning. Much of their products were sent to eastern markets where the population far exceeds the location production. One hundred fifty tons of poultry and eggs can be stored at 35 degrees below zero. Another cooler can handle 6,000 cases of eggs at a temperature of 35 above zero. Prior to the holiday season they handle large numbers of turkeys, ducks and geese. (Hastie:196-197).

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I. Building Downtown

Other manufacturing concerns in Perry included the Osmondson Company, makers of spade shovels; washing machines made by the Globe Manufacturing Company; and Progressive Foundry, which supplied castings to other local manufacturing concerns

Today, one of the largest manufacturing concerns in Perry is the Wiese Corporation. Henry Wiese, the founder, arrived in Perry in 1905 and engaged in blacksmithing. Wiese subsequently discovered a new way to repoint plowshares. During the 1930s, this operation prospered. They introduced a wider range of agricultural equipment. During World War II, this firm won a number of U. S government contracts, which ensured its success. Following the war, the plant was retooled for domestic purposes and continues today as one of the largest employers in Perry.

Boosterism

Boosterism has been an important factor in the strength of Perry's economy. The Commercial Club stands out among the community's boosters. Several decades ago, one local historian has noted that:

For years there has been a Commercial Club of businessmen whose object was to induce new business enterprises to come to Perry, and to help and encourage those who were already here. As far back as 1900 such a club existed under the leadership of Allen Harvey. It was during his time that the Monday noon meetings were begun.

During the years, many new enterprises were drawn to Perry, such as the De Laura Auto Co., the Osmundson Spade Factory, A. S. Kibby and the washing machine industry, the Van Camp Condensory, Shorthill Steel and Iron Works, and the Interurban railway. The Club was also instrumental in the first gravel roads, the first city paving, the expansion and relocating of the Milwaukee shops and the development of the Perry Town Lot and Improvement Co. In 1916, the club took the more modern name of Bureau of Commerce and Roscoe Zerwekh became secretary. The Grimes Canning Co., Mark Hat Co., At Last Washer Co., Progressive Foundry, Hausserman Packing Co. and Tri-County Fair were largely the result of the bureau's endeavors. Later the name was changed to Community Club. Today N. P. Black is at the head of the organization. (*Hastie's History of Dallas County, Iowa:230-231*)

The Commercial Club also promoted downtown retail interests through customer promotions and events. The club offered free sites to factories to assist any enterprise that would employ labor. The club's membership circa 1908 totaled about 300. (*Perry in Pictures*)

These activities, as well as the club's successful economic development outlined above, strengthened the health of Perry's economy and the vitality of downtown commerce. (*Perry in Pictures*)

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

I. Building Downtown

BOOMTOWN

Already in the 1870s, Perry had benefited by the presence of the railroads. Statistics for freight shipments from Perry by the railroad, compiled in 1878, provides one indication of the strength of the local economy at that time:

| <u>Product</u> | <u># of car lot shipments</u> |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Corn | 664 |
| Hogs | 153 |
| Oats | 90 |
| Cattle | 30 |
| Flax | 13 |
| Potatoes | 10 |
| Butter & eggs | 12 |
| Wheat | 2 |
| Total | 981 |

Source: Hastie 1962:46.

These statistics demonstrate the strength of Perry's agricultural hinterland and the quantities of agricultural products exported.

Then, in the 1880s, Perry entered a period of boomtown growth, based to a large extent upon the expansion of railroad activity in the community. In the 1880s, Perry was selected as the site for the division headquarters of the Milwaukee & St. Paul. This stimulated Perry's first boom. A wave of new construction followed in downtown Perry. Then, in 1912, the Milwaukee launched a building program including the construction of a new roundhouse and yards on the outskirts of Perry. This stimulated a second boom, and another wave of construction in downtown Perry occurred.

It should be remembered, from the discussion above, that enterprising citizens in Perry during the intervening and subsequent years of these booms activity sought and successfully lured many other new businesses and manufacturing concerns to the community.

First Boom

Local historians have noted the rapid growth in Perry brought on by railroad expansion. According to one source:

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

I. Building Downtown

The change from a straggling town to a busy, rapidly growing little city came in 1882, when the main line of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway, being extended west from Chicago to Council Bluffs, reached here. . . . Within three years after the Milwaukee road was built into the town, the population had grown to about 2,500, and since then there has been a steady growth. (Wood:167)

The following list of new commercial buildings constructed in downtown Perry during this period shows how the railroads helped stimulate commercial activity in downtown Perry:

FIRST BOOM CONSTRUCTION IN DOWNTOWN PERRY

| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Notes</u> |
|--------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Stewart House [or Hotel] | 1307-1309 2nd Street | Built in 1885, 3-stories, only 1st fl. extant |
| Wimmer Building | 1113 2nd Street | Built in 1886, remodeled facade |
| Wimmer Block | 1107-1109 2nd Street | Built in 1883, retains integrity |
| Leonard Block | 1114-1116 2nd Street | Built in 1883, facade stuccoed c. 1915 |

Fire subsequently took its toll on many other buildings constructed in downtown Perry during this period. Only those, which remain, are listed above.

Population statistics reveal another aspect of Perry's first boom. As shown in a table above, Perry's population more than tripled in size between 1880 and 1890. By 1890, Perry's population was also about three times bigger than that of Adel, the county seat of Dallas County.

Second Boom

In 1912, Perry enjoyed a second boom, stimulated by the construction of a new roundhouse and yards by the Milwaukee Railroad. In that year, the only other Iowa cities to exceed Perry's improvements were Des Moines, Waterloo, and Cedar Rapids. According to one source, the Milwaukee improvements, residential improvements in the Dilenbeck Addition, the Pattee Hotel, the buildings by Henry Miller, and the Shorthill Plant amounted to building costs of \$1,770,000 in Perry in that year. (Centennial)

All of these improvements and economic vitality they represented boosted local employment, population, and consumerism. In 1913, one publication reported that:

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The Milwaukee spends a half a million dollars in Perry every year; the globe Manufacturing Company pays out \$25,000 a year for salary alone; the Jones Chautauqua System embracing 130 Chautauquas in the State of Iowa, calls for thousands of dollars for printing, railroad fares, postal matter and talent. Among the other concerns are two Washing Machine Factories, Woodworking Factories, two Bottling Works, a Cement Works, a Steel Works, a Spade Factory, Van Camp Condensory, and the Milwaukee Car Shops. . . The Milwaukee, the Minneapolis and St. Louis, the Rock Island, and the Des Moines Interurban offers a big inducement to factories having many available sites along their tracks, which would suit the most cautious investor and to which they offer 99-year leases. (Davis)

This account nicely puts into perspective the Milwaukee's huge infusion of wealth into Perry.

Another gauge of the boom is evident in new downtown construction in Perry.

SECOND BOOM CONSTRUCTION IN DOWNTOWN PERRY

| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Notes</u> |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Hotel Pattee | 1108, 1110, 1112, 1114, 1116 Willis Avenue | Built in 1912-1913 |
| Rex Theatre | 1302 2nd Street | Built in 1912 |
| Security Savings Bank | 1110-1102 Willis Avenue | Built in 1913 |
| Northwestern Bell Telephone | 1215 Warford Street | Built in 1913 |
| U. S. Post Office | 1219 Warford Street | Cornerstone reads "MCMXIII" formally opened in 1915 |

These resources remain extant in downtown Perry today and call attention to the effects of the second boom for the community.

Outside Capital

It is thought that outside capital interests made substantial contributions to Perry's status as a boomtown during the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries. More research is needed to flesh out this story. For example, Allen Breed's magnificent improvements--including four commercial blocks standing side-by-side along 2nd Street--required massive capital for their construction. At the present time, little is

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I. Building Downtown

known about its source. It is presumed that Breed's contacts in state banking circles helped provide this support.

W. C. Harbach provides another example of capital investment in Perry by outside interests. William C. Harbach was the son of Leonard E. Harbach, president of the Inter-State Business Men's Accident Association of Des Moines and general manager of L. Harbach's Sons Company, manufacturers of upholstered furniture and mattresses. The Harbach family had wide-spread real estate property in Des Moines. They developed residential subdivisions, such as Linden Heights, and owned investment property, such as the Harbach Flats at 841 6th Avenue in Des Moines. In the 1920s, William C. Harbach served as secretary and treasurer of L. Harbach's Sons Company. (Des Moines City Directory:1920:562) In 1935, he purchased the Wimmer & Williams Block in Perry from Ed Carter. (Patterson:133) The building featured 3-stories and a strategic location on the northeast corner of Willis Avenue and 2nd Street. It housed a F. W. Woolworth Company's store. Clearly, Perry and Carter's property provided an attractive prospect for this experienced real estate investor. Although William C. Harbach died in 1939, this property remained in his family. Following the destruction of the building by fire in 1945, the Harbachs built a new building on the same site. It was constructed in 1946 by Kucharo Construction of Des Moines. (*Ibid.*) F. W. Woolworth Company subsequently leased this building.

FIRE! FIRE! FIRE!

Perry has suffered from numerous fires over the years. Although this could be said of many towns in Iowa during the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries, the number of fires in Perry is astonishing. Consider the following list:

MAJOR COMMERCIAL FIRES IN DOWNTOWN PERRY

| Year | Property | Cost of Damage |
|---------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| c. 1895 | Otis Mill | \$35,000 |
| 1898 | "The Big Fire" | 300,000 |
| 1906 | Clements Block | 50,000 |
| 1907 | Dignan's Store | 25,000 |
| 1914 | Osmundson Factory | 15,000 |
| 1915 | Globe Company | 130,000 |
| 1920 | Union Block & Carter-McColl Bldg. | 150,000 |
| 1922 | Condensory | 20,000 |
| 1928 | Lester's Garage | 30,000 |
| 1935 | Roundhouse | 200,000 |
| 1945 | Carter Block | 200,000 |

Source: Hastie, *History of Dallas County, Iowa*, p. 230;
and February 1945 *Perry Chief* article in Hamman Scrapbooks.

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The high volume of railroad traffic through Perry--and the proximity of these tracks to the downtown--contributed, in part, to these disasters.

This list illustrates how frequently commercial property was lost to fire in Perry. The fact that these buildings were quickly rebuilt--and often expanded in size--reflects Perry's status as a boomtown during the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries.

These fires have provided colorful subject matter for local historians. The "Big Fire" of 1898 was particularly devastating. One account recorded that:

Perry has been the most severe sufferer from fire of all Dallas county communities and probably of all towns of similar size in Iowa.

In November, 1898, in a great blaze there went up \$200,000 worth of buildings. Twenty-two new business houses on both sides of Second street from Lucinda south, including Opera House and Masonic Temple, melted down like glass. The first fire of the evening started in the Oxford restaurant. This was extinguished, but an hour later a second fire started in John Mitchell's livery barn. The barn was destroyed, fifteen horses perishing in the flames. The fire was now on both sides of the street and it seemed for a time that the city was doomed to total ruin.. .

After a most desperate and courageous fight the fire was cornered after it had gutted the Gamble furniture store and was confined to the territory it then occupied...

The fire was supposed to be the work of incendiaries and the result of a deliberate attempt to lay the entire city in ashes. (Wood:177)

Figure I-g illustrates a map of this fire.

On March 29, 1910, another fire occurred. Sparks from the M.&St.L. engine began this fire around 3:30 p.m. The wind was exceptionally strong and blew throughout most of the fire. Burning shingles and boards were carried several blocks to the northeast. Severely damaged buildings included the homes of Mrs. G. Davis on 4th Street and Ira Hurless on Willis Avenue. Other damaged homes included those of Art Capen, C. Durant Jones, Clark Kerlin, O. F. Roddan, Tom Stevenson, Dr. Ross, S. S. Dilenbeck, and the Lartz Feed Shed. The Perry & Petty Ice House, including its barns, office and outbuildings, and the produce house of Shotwell & Company (all located on Railroad Street) were destroyed. (Charlotte Van Cleave transcription)

These and other destructive fires plagued downtown Perry throughout the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. The presence of numerous examples of Art Deco and Moderne-influenced commercial architecture can be explained, at least in part, by rebuilding programs in their wake.

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I. Building Downtown

To help minimize the danger of fire, the City of Perry instituted building standards for properties within stipulated fire limits. The city's reputation had suffered a blow to its prestige, according to one newspaper account of October 9, 1907. "The constant report of fires in this city was hurting Perry more than we might suppose. It was exaggerated and spread all over the entire state." (*The Perry Daily Chief* October 9, 1907; Hamman Scrapbooks) In particular, the rear of buildings posed safety hazards. On a tour of inspection in 1907, members of the Perry city council found:

Dilapidated sheds and closets, oil boxes and warehouses with the doors wide open, piles of rubbish and paper exposed, high grass and weeds, filth and cans, and trash were found in almost every place. (*Ibid.*:October 16, 1907)

In spite of some objections among property owners, the following fire limit boundaries were established--the east side of 3rd Street on the east, the north side of Otley Avenue on the south, the M.&St.L. Railroad tracks and the east side of First Avenue on the west, and the properties facing 2nd Street between Lucinda and Bateman on the north. (See Figure 1-f.) Buildings within these fire limits were required by municipal ordinance to possess structural safeguards to prevent or retard the spread of fire.

OTHER DOWNTOWN ESTABLISHMENTS

In addition to retail stores and professional offices, downtown Perry also served as the home for a number of institutions and organizations. Many of them preferred to locate in downtown Perry for the convenience and for the visibility that location conferred. These establishments have included lodge halls, service-related businesses, and public institutions. Each contributed to downtown Perry's role as the heart of the community, and many constructed new buildings to house their activities.

During the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries, Perry's downtown district provided the primary meeting place for the social life of the community. For example, churches generally lacked social halls during that period of time. Schools also were not equipped with kitchens and facilities for social gatherings. Events, such as anniversary and wedding receptions (which might be held in churches or schools today) were much more likely to be held in hotels or lodge halls. These semi-public meeting places, therefore, played a bigger role in the social life of the community than they do today. Their presence in downtown Perry added vitality to the streetscape. For example, the International Order of Odd Fellows in Perry--organized in 1879 and chartered in 1880--built a new lodge hall in 1895 on the southeast corner of the Triangle. (Hastie 1962:214) About the same time, the Elks built their new lodge hall at 1211 2nd Street.

Public utilities and other service institutions (which might today locate in strip malls) preferred locations in downtown Perry for their offices and equipment. Perry's telephone service provides one example. The first long-distance telephone service in Perry was franchised by the city in 1883 to the Iowa Union

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Telephone and Telegraph Company of Davenport, Iowa. Following the financial failure of this firm, telephone service in Perry was provided by only a single line. (Perry Centennial) In 1896 a local entrepreneur began service with 70 subscribers. This service was sold to the Perry Telephone Company. It ownership changed hands a number of times, until 1921, when Northwestern Bell Telephone Company purchased it. In the meantime, a building had been built in 1913 at 1215 Warford Street to house the company. This facility became too small, after Northwestern Bell acquired many small, independent telephone companies in adjoining towns, and a new building was erected at Fifth and Willis. (*Ibid.*)

The construction of the Perry Carnegie Library at 1123 Willis Avenue provides an example of a public institution locating in the downtown district. Completed and first occupied in 1904, this building made an important contribution to downtown Perry. Located at the intersection of Willis Avenue and 2nd Street, this building serves as a landmark to signal one's arrival at the very hub of the community.

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I. Building Downtown

PERRY'S ORIGINAL TOWN PLAT

ALSO SHOWING MILLER'S ADDITION

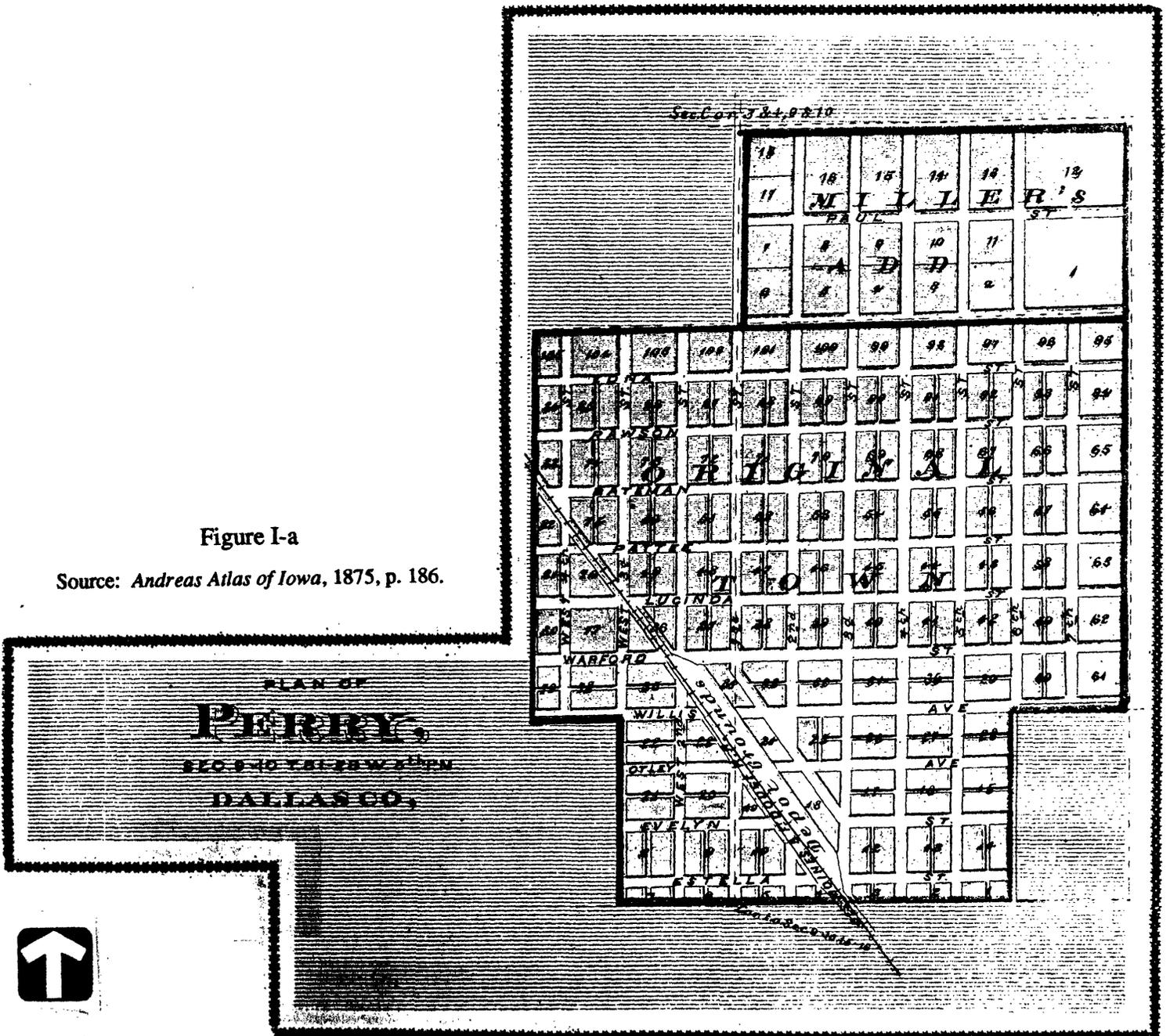


Figure I-a

Source: *Andreas Atlas of Iowa*, 1875, p. 186.



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PERRY IN 1916

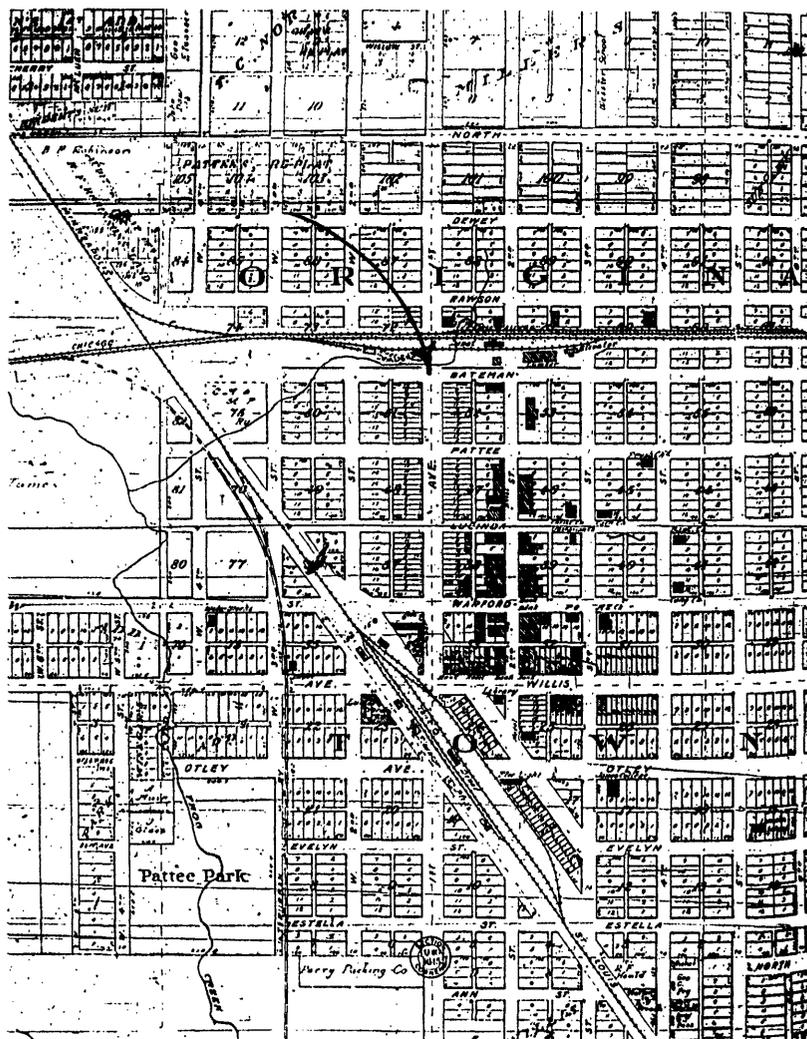


Figure I-b

The presence of the railroads is clearly evident. Note the east-west route of the Milwaukee and the diagonal route of the M&St. L. Also note how the city lots adjacent to First Avenue (arrow) were platted in small parcels to promote commercial development. That land use occurred to a limited extent only.

Source: *Atlas of Dallas County, Iowa, 1916.*

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I. Building Downtown

THE TRIANGLE

1918

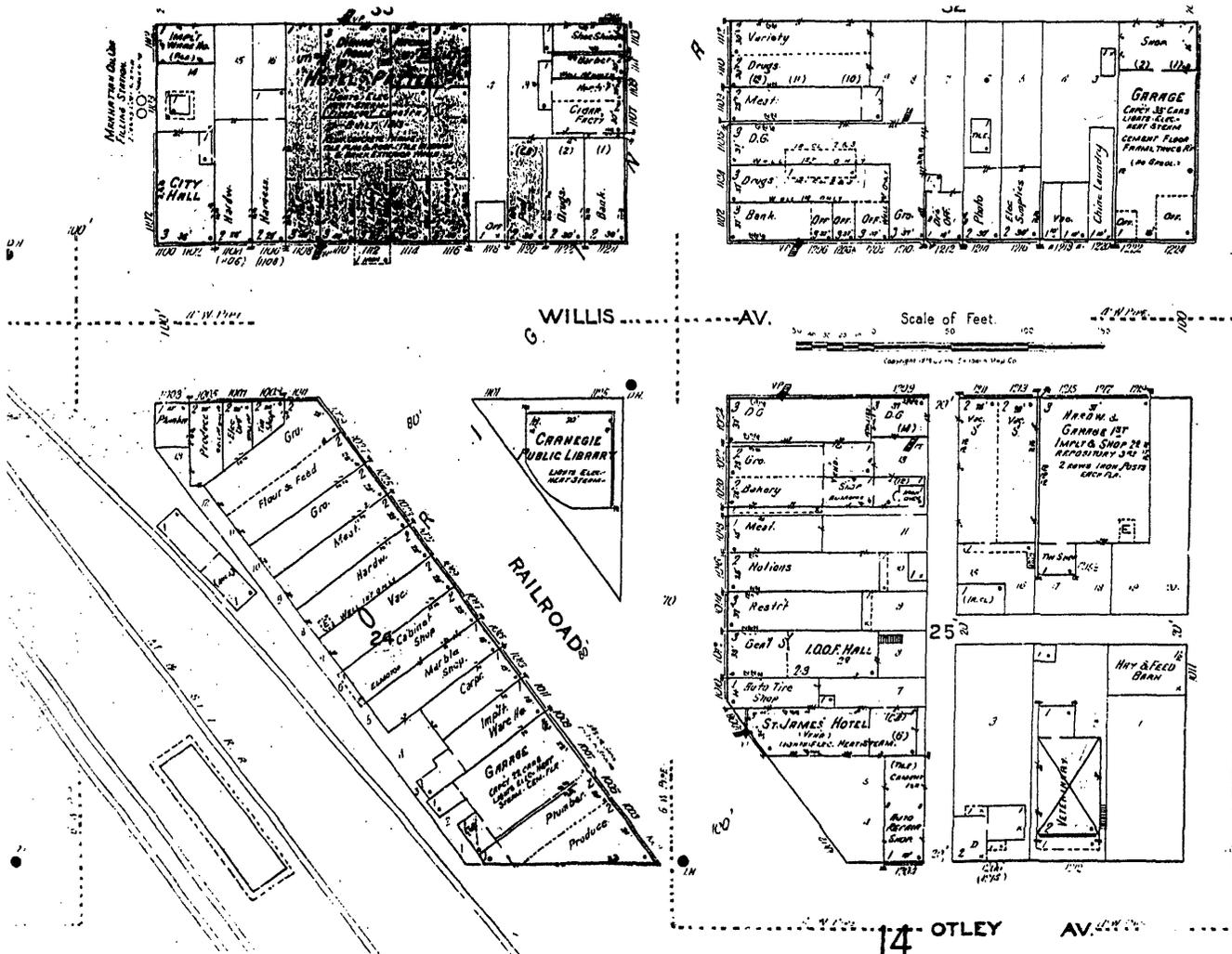


Figure I-c

Businesses west of Railroad Street generally handle durable goods. Those east of the library also provide services to the traveling public. The unidentified building between the railroad tracks is the M.&St.L. passenger and freight depot.

Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1918.

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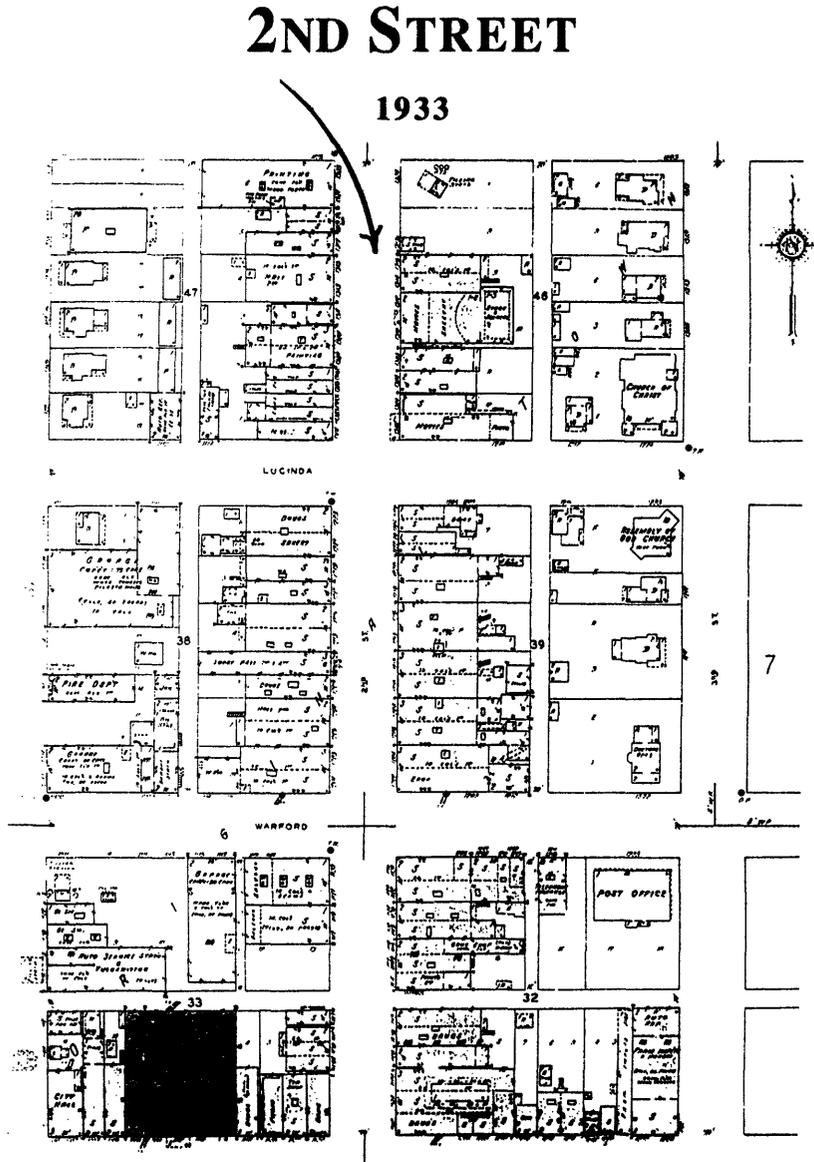


Figure I-d

This map clearly illustrates how 2nd Street (arrow) totally eclipsed First Avenue (parallel on the left) as Perry's primary commercial corridor.

Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1933.

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SOUTH OF OTLEY

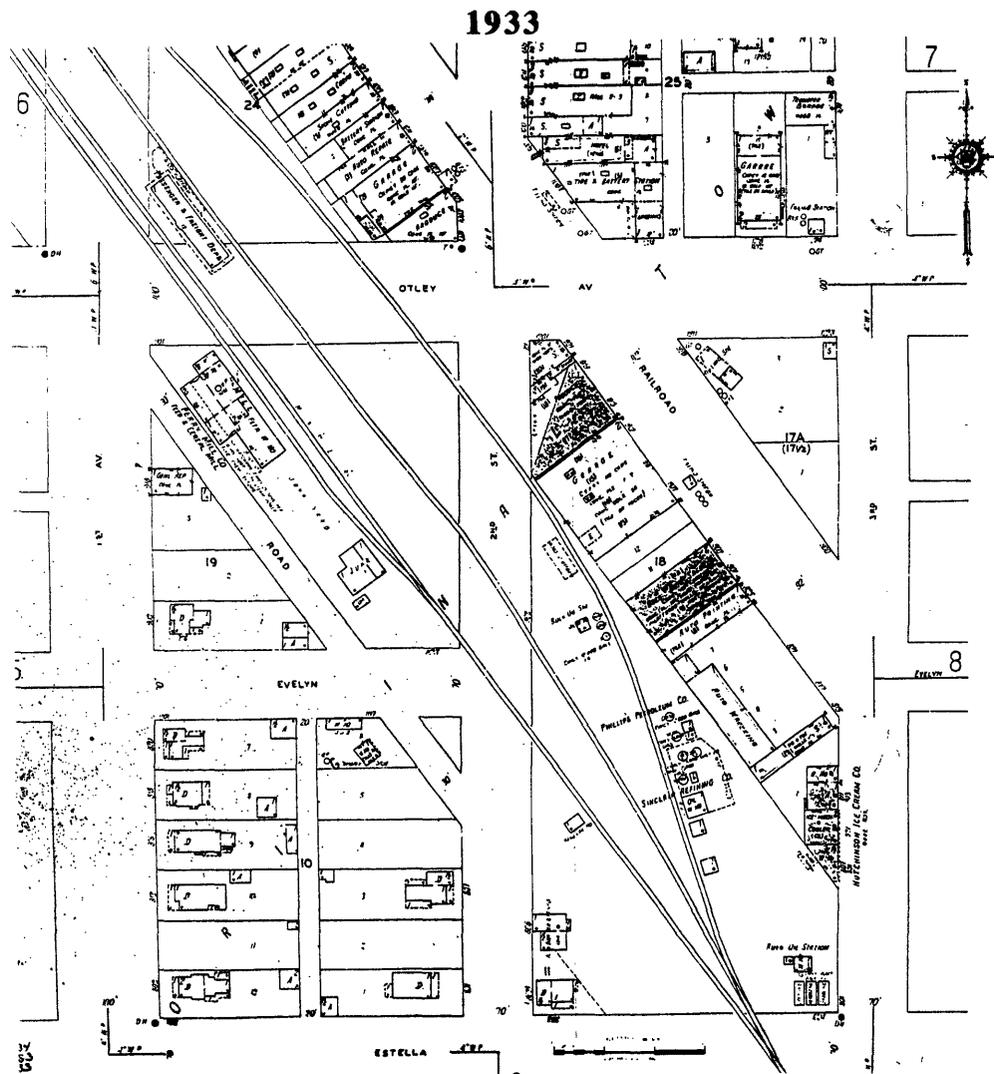


Figure I-e

This map clearly shows the irregularity of streets and lots south of Otley Avenue. The area developed somewhat later in time than The Triangle and 2nd Street and then mostly served light industrial and transportation-related businesses.

Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1933.

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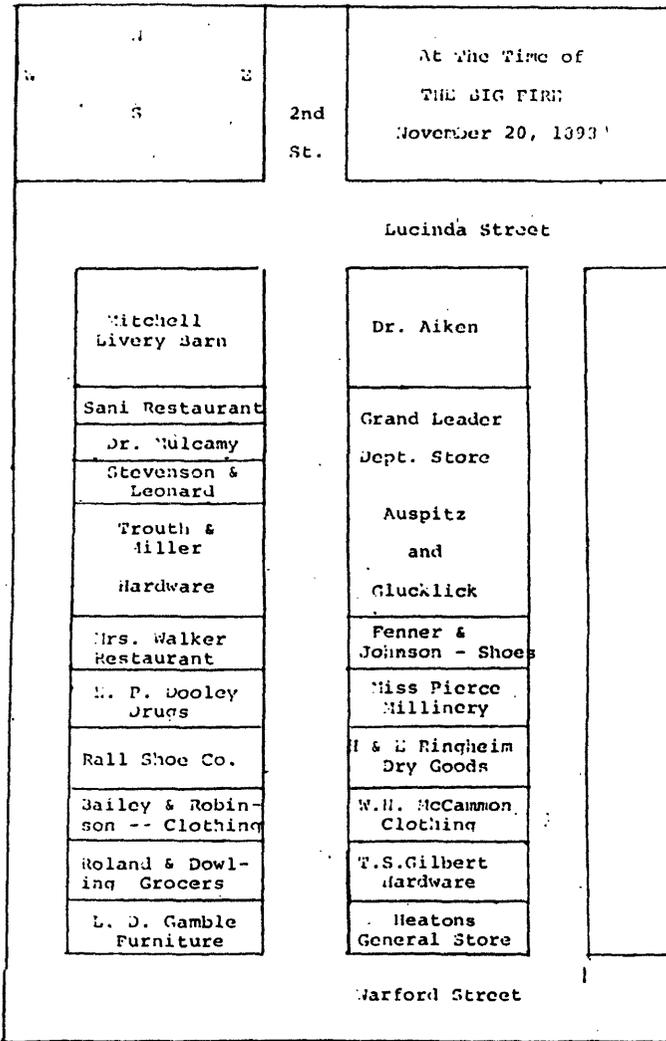
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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

I. Building Downtown

MAP OF 1898 FIRE



Map of fire

This map shows the location of the business places during the big fire of Nov. 20, 1898. The blaze started in the Mitchell Livery Barn (shown at the north end of the Second Street block on the west side) and burned on both sides of Second St. to Warford Street where it was finally stopped. This map was drawn up based on reports from various people who remembered the fire.

Although devastating to property owners, the 1898 fire opened up a big tract of choice land in downtown Perry for re-development. The behemoth 3-story Breed Block rose from the ashes on the east side of the street to replace all the properties from Heaton to Auspitz and Glucklick.

Figure I-g

Source: *Perry Daily Chief* in Hamman Scrapbooks.

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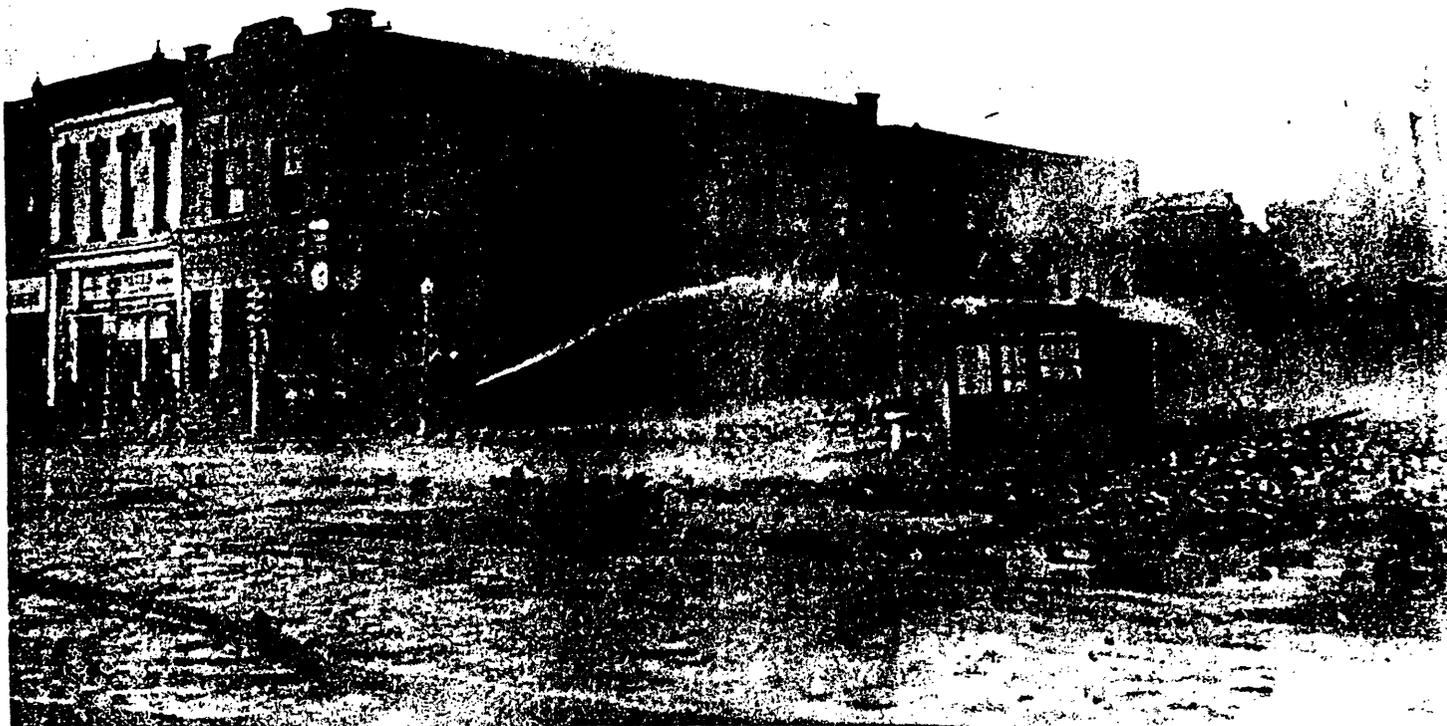
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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

I. Building Downtown

BIG FIRE

1945



One of the worst downtown fires in the history of Perry occurred when the old Carter Building was razed in February of 1945. This picture, taken from the southeast corner of Second and Willis, shows that what is today Conklin Jewelers had been completely leveled by the fire. The buildings just north of it are

also in ruins. Losses in the fire were estimated at \$200,000-- a great deal of money in those days. Although the fire left homeless those who had occupied upstairs apartments, it left untouched the popcorn stand operated by Celeste Council.

Figure I-h

In 1945 fire completely destroyed the Carter Building, home of Perry's Woolworth's. Located on the northeast corner of Willis Avenue and 2nd Street, the fire spared the adjacent Council Popcorn Stand.

Source: Hamman Scrapbooks, February 1945.

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

II. Transportation

II. TRANSPORTATION

INTRODUCTION

Transportation, as an historic context, has always been of primary importance for Perry. The city emerged as a boomtown because of the railroad. Later, the automobile further stimulated the local economy. According to an early history of Dallas County:

Dallas county has very good railroad facilities, having two main line roads passing through it, one east and west opening direct communication with Chicago and eastern cities, as also with the west; and another north and south road passing diagonally through the east part of the county and opening communication north and south as well as making connection with the two main east and west lines, passing north and south of it.
(History of Dallas County 1879:384)

This chapter discusses Perry's evolving transportation resources and the opportunities they offered. The story begins in the 1806s when Perry was founded and continues throughout the late Nineteenth and early to mid-Twentieth Centuries, when the railroads stimulated new growth in and around the city. In addition to the railroads, Perry's transportation resources also included an interurban line, overland vehicular routes, and an early fascination with the automobile. The coal mines in the neighboring community of Moran are also included in this discussion, because they contributed to Perry's prosperity and were the direct effects of the railroads.

RAILROADS

In the years immediately prior to the American Civil War, railroads began building routes from the Mississippi River westward into Iowa. Various railroad companies established beachheads on Iowa's eastern seaboard, including Dubuque, Clinton (Lyons), Davenport, Muscatine, Burlington, and Keokuk. The railroads pushed westward from these points. Following the end of the Civil War in 1865, these companies further expanded their lines. By 1869, Perry had been connected by rail to much of the nation. Ultimately two major railroads and one interurban line served the community. Railroads greatly stimulated the local economy by providing jobs for its citizens, boosting Perry as a market center, and encouraging outside capital to invest in Perry.

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M.&St.L.

The first railroad to reach Perry was the Des Moines & Fort Dodge, which inaugurated service in 1869. The selection of Perry as a station point increased the community's importance over its potential competitors. This line also ran through Minburn, Dallas Center, Waukee, Ashawa, and Valley Junction on its route to Des Moines (Andreas:181, 185). To the north, it ran to Fort Dodge. The Des Moines & Fort Dodge may also have engaged in real estate development, given the fact that it was granted five acres of land and 32 city lots in the original town plat.

In 1887, the Rock Island railroad acquired the Des Moines & Fort Dodge. Later, the Minneapolis & St. Louis railroad (M.&St.L.) secured rights to run its trains over these lines. That road's name subsequently became the most widely associated with this trackage in Perry. By 1904, the M.&St.L. had acquired a controlling interest in this line and assumed full possession in 1915. In 1959, this line was sold to the Northwestern, which itself has lately been acquired by Union Pacific.

Milwaukee

Another railroad in Perry, the Milwaukee, influenced the growth of the community even more than the Rock Island. By the early 1880s the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul railroad, one of the nation's large roads, had reached the Dallas County area in its construction of trackage across Iowa. At this time, a group of concerned local citizens, including D. J. Pattee, W. L. Warren and H. H. Cardell, undertook to persuade the railroad to establish Perry as a division station. To this end, civic minded people in Perry purchased a right-of-way through Perry. In addition to this, the railroad stipulated that a site for the railroad shops also be donated. Twenty acres of land were made available to the railroad and the Milwaukee located its shops there in 1882 (Hastie 1962:111-112). Perry's selection as a division point on the Milwaukee line "started the little hamlet from its slumbers as a way station on the Des Moines and Fort Dodge Railway into the activities of a hustling little city." (*Advertiser*, April 5, 1912) By June 1882, the Milwaukee had completed construction of track to Council Bluffs. The following years, this road provided employment for a considerable number of residents in Perry and the vicinity. Jobs included a full range of personnel to operate the trains, as well as equipment maintenance at the shops and along the trackage and a cadre of clerical workers for business operations. In addition to a combination depot and freight house, stockyards were built at 16th Street along the railroad corridor to facilitate food exportation.

In 1912 the Milwaukee launched an expansion program and almost overnight the community became a boomtown. As Eugene Hastie has written:

By 1912 the Milwaukee was ready for a great expansion program on the Iowa division, and especially at Perry. Two farms were purchased west of Perry on which to build a new round house, shops and yards. The round-house had 32 stalls, and in the shops was some of the finest and most up-to-date machinery in the country. The road was double tracked

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and a new bridge built over the Des Moines river a mile or so north of the old site. In some respects it exceeded any other railroad bridge in the country. It was 2473 feet long and 146 feet above the normal water level. In the fall of 1913 all these things were put into use.

At the height of the Milwaukee activities about 725 people were employed here, and the monthly payroll was approximately \$85,000, according to a special edition of the Perry Chief in 1928. Milwaukee property in Perry was valued at 3 1/2 million. (*Ibid.*:114)

The Milwaukee's 1912 expansion included the construction of a new roundhouse and railroad yards. (See Figure II-b.) Located on the land west of the M.&St.L. railroad tracks, and east of the Raccoon River, the construction of these new facilities required the importation of outside labor for their completion. According to one account:

There was so much building going on in Perry that year that workers were difficult to hire. A gang of brick masons was brought in to work on the new roundhouse. Soon these terminal yards became a mecca for pedestrian and autoist sight-seers. One mild Sunday in October it was reported that there were 200 autos at the site and that an estimated 1,500 had walked out from the city to see the progress. (*Patterson*:210)

The Milwaukee line used its facilities in Perry for various purposes. According to one account, for example:

All the depots between Cambridge and Council Bluffs were framed in Perry. The Milwaukee company had a huge supply of lumber piled in the yards. Tracks were laid all over the yards in every direction to move material around; a turntable was placed at every junction. A car loaded with lumber could be pushed wherever needed. (*Ibid.*:199)

The railroad's presence in Perry increased as additional facilities were erected to serve growing needs. In 1882, the road decided to locate its division headquarters in Perry. A number of local citizens had raised about \$8,000 as an inducement. The following year, cattle yards were constructed near the tracks. This project, too, had received financial support from Perry's citizens. (*Ibid.*:200-201)

Railroad passenger and freight profits and service declined following World War II. Still, the continued strength of the Milwaukee railroad in Perry was indicated by construction of a new passenger depot on the north edge of downtown Perry in the 1960s, a time in which much railroad passenger service in Iowa and the nation had ceased. Ultimately, however, Perry was not immune to these changes. Although in 1962 one local historian could still write that "it is believed that there are 400 people living in Perry that work for

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the [Milwaukee railroad] company" (*Ibid.*), this too changed. Today, few residents of Perry are employed by the railroad.

INTERURBAN RAILROAD

During the early Twentieth Century, Perry was connected to other Central Iowa communities by an interurban railroad. This facility provided a convenient means of commuting to work for jobs beyond the corporate limits of Perry.

The Des Moines city street railway system, sometimes known as the Inter-Urban Railway, served the metropolitan area in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries with a variety of city and rural routes, including service to Fort Des Moines #3, Altoona, and Colfax. In 1905 construction was begun on a new branch of this line, known as the Beaver Valley Division. By 1906, service on this line was inaugurated to Granger and Woodward. Perry was reached later that year. At its greatest extent, this route served the following stations: Perry, Gardner, Beaver Park, Woodward, Moran, Chamberlain, Elwood, Granger, Yanktown, Miller, Stowes, Porter Junction, Andrews, Herrold, Coal Mine #8, Lambert, Camp Dodge, Hyperion, Johnston, Lovington, Acme, and metropolitan points in Des Moines. (See Figure II-a.)

Although other extensions of this inter-urban line were projected to other rural areas in central Iowa--including Indianola, Winterset, and Eldora--the Beaver Valley Division was the only branch implemented. (Carlson:78) This interurban carried some freight, as well as passengers. When the Van Camp Company Milk Condensory was established in 1907 in Perry, for example, "great quantities of milk came in on the Interurban from country road crossings..." (Hastie:188). A short branch line was built between the interurban and the Norwood Coal Mine near Moran, Iowa. (See Figure II-a.)

The patronage of the Beaver Valley Division proved to be a history of ups-and-downs. During World War I, the division prospered because of construction of a U. S. Army training base located on the route at Camp Dodge, Iowa. Ridership skyrocketed. Following Armistice Day 1918, ridership rapidly declined and was subsequently terminated. By 1922 company profits had dwindled to a point that the firm filed for receivership and was reorganized. The route limped all for a number of years. The Beaver Valley Division line ceased service to Woodward in 1941. Then, during World War II, the service to Camp Dodge was reactivated. Following World War II, the company went into bankruptcy. For much of this period, however, the line between Granger and Perry continued to operate. One source has favorably compared the ridership on the Perry line with that on the Colfax line:

The Colfax line's early demise is attributed to the lack of population density, whereas commuter traffic supported the Perry line. The 6:15 PM trip usually had standees in the baggage compartment. After the Des Moines station was torn down in July, 1949, [trolley number] 1712 became the station. (*Iowa Trolleys*:86)

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This line finally ceased operations in 1953. (*Ibid.*)

The interurban's facilities in Perry included a depot and substation and a freight house. These were located between Warford Street and Willis Avenue directly east of West 3rd Street. (See Figure II-c.) The interurban route entered Perry from the east and passed through the southern section of the city. The route veered to the north at First Avenue and continued north along the east side of West 3rd Street to Warford Street. From there, the line ran on a diagonal line paralleling the M.&St.L., a short distance to an "extremely sharp way beyond the station, where the cars reversed its direction. (*Ibid.*:85)

The interurban line stimulated the establishment of related businesses. For example, the Inter-Urban Liberty & Transfer Company maintained a facility in the 1000 block of West Willis Avenue. This facility included an office building, wagon house, and a livestock feedlot.

OVERLAND TRANSPORTATION

Overland wagon routes (and later highways) brought cartage and passengers through Perry, encouraging the improvement of the thoroughfares along which they ran and attracting commercial and residential development along their courses. These thoroughfares were often the first streets to be improved with hard-surfaces, further promoting their appeal.

An important factor in the community's development has been Willis Avenue. This east-west corridor became an overland transportation route and a location of preference for quality home construction. Victorians in Perry availed themselves of the opportunity to display conspicuously their economic prosperity along this avenue. These developments also benefited Perry's downtown district. Willis Avenue serves as a traffic artery into the heart of the downtown. Residential improvements along it provided an appealing approach to the downtown district.

The rise of the automobile has contributed to Perry's position in Central Iowa. During World War II, for example, many Perry people worked at U. S. Rubber's ordinance plant in Ankeny, Iowa, commuting by private automobile or the Hawkeye Bus Company between home and work (Hastie 1962:222). Now, in the 1990s, many Perry residents commute by automobile to the Des Moines metropolitan area. The recently completed highway between Perry and that area will further facilitate commuting and encourage further tourism in Perry.

AUTOMOBILE

The advent of the automobile further strengthened Perry's hegemony as a market center for its agricultural hinterland. For a brief period of time, the automobile also expanded the city's industrial base.

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Cars first began to appear in Perry around 1900. In 1901 an out-of-state drummer appeared in town from Indiana. Although he traveled to Perry by the railroad, he brought with him an automobile as freight. This machine resulted in several newspaper articles. ("The auto comes to Perry": Hamman Scrapbook 3)

By 1909 Perry boasted of automobile garages and dealers, offering Buick, Mason, and other cars. Service under the auspices of the American Automobile Association were offered in town. (*Ibid.*: "Where the Mason car was sold" and "Buicks at Cox garage") Indeed, a factory for manufacturing automobiles was established in Perry. In 1903, the first product of the DeLoura Manufacturing Company, based in Perry, debuted. It was a single-seated vehicle with a \$750 value. (*Ibid.*) During this early period of automobile manufacturing, many small factories sprang up in Iowa and across the Midwest. (*Ibid.*: "Perry will have an auto factory") The fact that Mr. DeLoura, the founder of the DeLoura Auto Manufacturing Co. and its sole investor, chose to relocate his operations from Fort Madison, Iowa, to Perry shows the status Perry enjoyed during the early years of the Twentieth Century as a boomtown and manufacturing center.

By 1913 the automobile had become a common sight in downtown Perry and a cause for complaint:

A new cause of complaint came to light yesterday and it will probably be more in evidence during the summer. Farmers make the assertion that owners of automobiles drive up to the curb along Second Street, leave their cars stand for hours and go about their business. In some parts of the street there are cars on both sides of the pavement and it is hard for the teams to pass in between. (Hamman Scrapbook 3: "Autos block Perry Street")

Other complaints followed. In 1919 local cartoonist V. T. ("Snick") Hamlin called attention to Perry's need for parking restrictions.

The automobile further stimulated the local economy by increasing the numbers of shoppers to downtown Perry. By 1919, Perry was attracting "thousands of auto visitors each week," according to one newspaper source. (*The Perry Daily Chief* November 25, 1919) Many local businesses emerged to cater to their needs--auto dealerships, repair shops, garages, and gas stations. Each of these businesses offered new employment opportunities. Problems also followed in the wake of the automobiles, as cartoonist V. T. ("Snick") Hamlin detailed in a 1919 *Daily Perry Chief* drawing. (See Figure II-d.) They have a contemporary air.

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TRANSPORTATION AFFECTS PERRY

The effects of transportation, particularly the railroads, on Perry's economy were substantial. The railroads' payrolls supported many local families, who in turn patronized local businesses. These businesses also seized many opportunities, associated with the railroads' presence in Perry, to gain market share. According to one local history, for example:

The train service on the Milwaukee and the M.&St. L. also aided in the development of a large out of town trade and from Minburn, Dallas Center and even Waukee on the south, Angus, Rippey and as far north as Dana, each day brings in the shoppers. The same is true on the Milwaukee, even to a greater extent. As far east as Cambridge and as far west as Manilla, Perry is chosen in preference to all other cities as the town for shopping in all lines.

Many of the merchants have established a fare-paying rebate plan and thus the visit of their out of town customers is made without expense and the satisfaction they feel has augmented the numbers with each passing season. (Wood:184)

These merchandising schemes further promoted Perry as a market center. They also illustrate the spirit of boosterism, which characterized Perry's business community during the early Twentieth Century.

The railroads also affected land use and its development in Perry. For example, the location of the Milwaukee depot on 2nd Street to the north of the downtown stimulated the development of that street as a primary corridor of commerce within the community. The location of the railroad tracks predetermined sites for many businesses. Light and heavy industries located near the tracks. They included wholesale and retail operations dealing with bulk goods such as lumber (shipped into Perry) and agricultural products such as hogs, corn, cattle, and butter and eggs, which were shipped out. To the north of downtown, a collection of light and heavy industrial operations developed adjacent to the Milwaukee corridor, particularly along its east-west portion. Included among them were a lumber yard, the Wiese Corporation, a poultry operation, and a grain elevator business.

In short, Perry provides an outstanding example of how railroads stimulated the growth of small towns. By 1900, the population of Perry had eclipsed that of every other community in Dallas County, including Minburn, Dallas Center, Waukee, Booneville, Van Meter, DeSoto, Dexter, Wiscotta, Redfield, and Adel, the county seat. Perry achieved this growth in spite of the fact that the county seat (a sure factor for town growth) was located elsewhere. The railroads' ever expanding employment in Perry and their stimulus to the local economy enabled that city to achieve those population gains.

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INTERURBAN LINE SERVING PERRY

1916

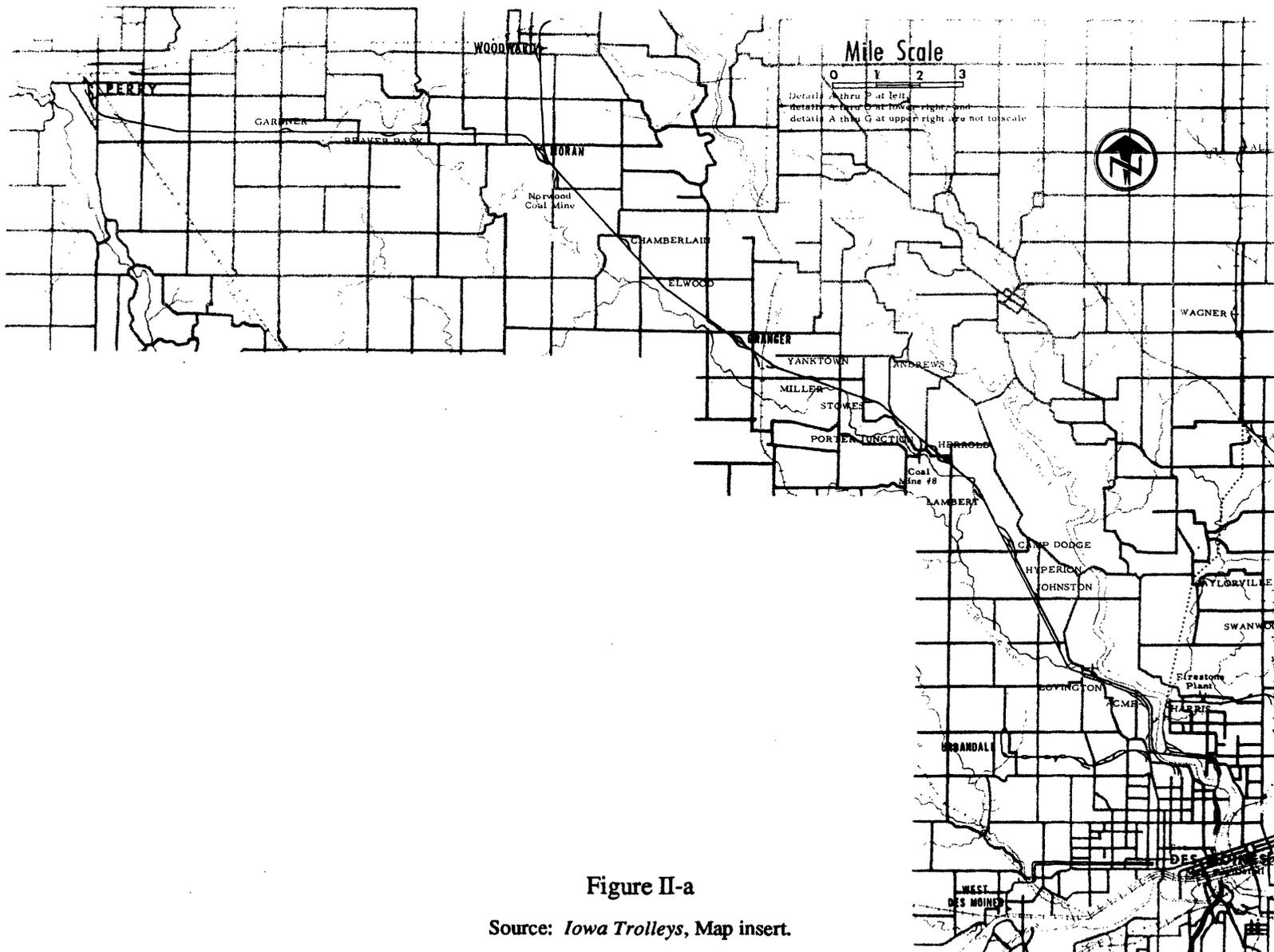


Figure II-a

Source: *Iowa Trolleys*, Map insert.

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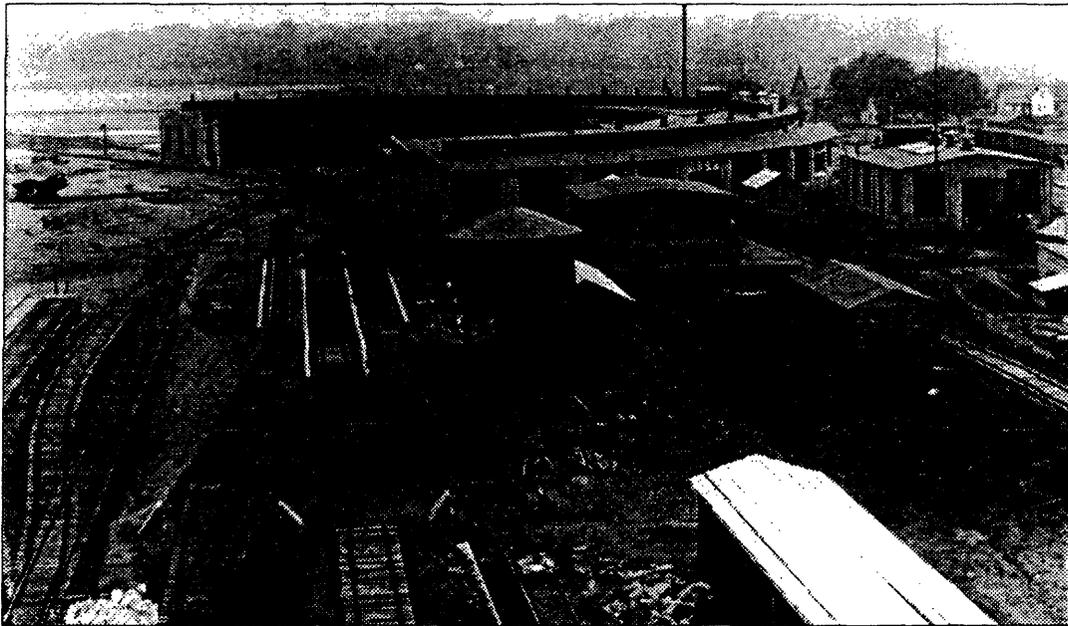
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NEW RAILROAD YARDS IN PERRY

1912



New Milwaukee Roundhouse and Yards

The Milwaukee Railroad bought the land west of the M. & St. L. crossing and east of the Raccoon River in July 1912 for use as a new roundhouse and yards.

Figure II-b

Source: *A Town Called Perry.*

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ALL ABOARD AT PERRY

1948



Figure II-c

“Perry was a favorite spot for photographers. [Interurban trolley number] 1714 is awaiting its departure for Des Moines in 1947.”

Source: *Iowa Trolleys*, p. 87.

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LIFE WITH CARS

PERRY, A TOWN OF 3500, WITH THOUSANDS OF AUTO VISITORS EACH WEEK CARES FOR THEIR TRAFFIC AND THEIR STREETS LIKE THIS--



- BUT IN TWO TOWNS IN DALLAS COUNTY OF LESS THAN ONE-FOURTH THE SIZE OF PERRY, WE FIND SYSTEM, PARKING INSTRUCTIONS, AND NEAT INTERSECTION POSTS---



- WHICH ALL GOES TO SHOW THAT PERRY ISN'T VERY BIG WHEN IT COMES TO CITY ADMINISTRATIONS.

Figure II-d

Local cartoonist V. T. ("Snick") Hamlin urged traffic reforms, like parking regulations and directional posts at intersections.

Source: *Perry Daily Chief*, November 25, 1919.

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III. COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

Perry's downtown district is architecturally significant for multiple reasons. Many of its resources were architect-designed. They show the influence of successive architectural styles from Late Victorian through Art Moderne. The variety of brick color and texture is also notable in the district. All these architectural characteristics show that property owners welcomed new architectural ideas and building materials and were not hidebound by the past. They may have also used architecture to distinguish their business house from competitors.

For the purpose of analysis and evaluation, the architectural resources of Perry's downtown district can be understood within the context of five topics. Each of these topics is discussed below in the following order:

Architects
Architectural Style
Building Materials
Building Types
Contractor-Builder Contributions

The section on "Architects" discusses how professional designers affected the built environment in downtown Perry. The section on "Architectural Style" discusses how national trends in architectural design have affected these properties. "Building Materials" discusses those construction products employed in Perry over the years, their various types, and the motivations behind their selection. The section on "Building Types" analyzes the different forms of commercial architecture in downtown Perry. Contractor-builders have also contributed to the development of downtown Perry. Their work is touched upon in the final section of this chapter.

ARCHITECTS

As a boomtown during the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century, the improvement of Perry's downtown district stimulated major construction. By the early Twentieth Century, several architectural firms were working in Perry. They included Proudfoot and Bird of Des Moines, who designed the Hotel Pattee, and the Morrison & Company, also of Des Moines. Other architectural firms also participated in Perry's downtown boom.

The list on the following page identifies architects whose designs for commercial architecture in Perry are documented.

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ARCHITECT-DESIGNED RESOURCES IN DOWNTOWN PERRY

| <u>Name of Architect</u> | <u>Name of Resource</u> | <u>Year Completed</u> | <u>Address</u> |
|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| C. C. Cross & Son | Breed Block** | 1899 | 1202-1208 2nd St. |
| C. C. Cross & Son | Breed Block** | 1899 | 1210-1212 2nd St. |
| C. C. Cross & Son | Breed Block** | 1902 | 1214-1216 2nd St. |
| Proudfoot and Bird | Hotel Pattee* | 1913 | 1108-1116 Willis Ave. |
| Morrison & Co. | Security Savings Bank**** | 1913 | 1100-1102 Willis Ave. |
| Morrison & Co. | J. R. James Building**** | 1914 | 1214-1216 Willis Ave. |
| Liebbe, Nourse & Rasmussen | Perry Carnegie Library*** | 1904 | 1123 Willis Ave. |
| Oscar Wenderoth | U. S. Post Office | 1915 | 1219 Warford St. |
| Carl Hunter & Russell Parks | Kastrup-McCauley Building* | 1965 | 1313 2nd St. |
| Donald M. McLennan | The Fair Store***** | 1928 | 1117-1119 2nd St. |
| Donald M. McLennan | <i>Perry Chief</i> | 1928 | 1321-1323 2nd St. |
| Donald M. McLennan | Bruce-McLaughlin Apartments* | c. 1928 | To be identified |
| Donald M. McLennan | Bruce-McLaughlin* (entrance & 2nd fl.) | c. 1928 | 1201-1203 2nd St. |

- Sources:
- * Hamman Scrapbooks.
 - ** Marjorie Patterson, *A Town Called Perry*.
 - *** Iowa Architects Files.
 - **** *American Contractor*, 1913.
 - ***** *Perry Chief*, July 22 [?] 1927.

The following thumbnail sketches outline information about these identified architects and their designs in downtown Perry. Additional information about these and other architects and their contributions to Perry will undoubtedly come to light as this topic is researched.

C. C Cross & Son

Commissioned following the Great Fire of 1898 by local banker Allen Breed, architects C. C. Cross & Son of Des Moines prepared the design for the Breed Block, largest commercial edifice in Perry at the time of its construction. The building also remains the largest in downtown Perry to the present day. Conceived as a compound commercial block (see below), this building possesses three stories and contains numerous

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numerous businesses. The Breed Block was constructed in two phases. In 1898, three commercial blocks were built. In 1900, a fourth block was added to complete the edifice. The following table lists these various units, some of which are nonextant:

BREED BLOCK BY UNITS

| <u>Address</u> | <u>Convenience Name</u> | <u>Date of Construction</u> | <u>Notes</u> |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| 1202-1204 2nd St. | South Unit | 1898 | Razed circa 1970 |
| 1206-1208 2nd St. | South-Central Unit | 1898 | Razed circa 1970 |
| 1210-1212 2nd St. | North-Central Unit | 1898 | Extant |
| 1214-1216 2nd St. | North Unit | 1900 | Extant |

The building's design is influenced by Late Victorian styling, which can be seen in the building's emphasis on verticality. Its 1/1 double window sashes are high, and some are also narrow. This fenestration leads the viewer's eye upward. The various units of the block are defined by brickworked pilasters. These also contributed to the feeling of verticality. As a counterpoint, the segmental arches and hold molds above the third floor windows help tie this long building together by providing a strong rhythmic element across the top of the facade. The cornice, which also extends across the top of the facade, provides another unifying horizontal element. Although one portion of the Breed Block was razed in the 1970s, this edifice retains its integrity as a monumental example of Late Victorian design in Perry.

In addition to the Breed Block, the firm of C. C. Cross prepared the designs for the Christian Church in Perry (Patterson:181), a nonextant building, which stood at 1224 Lucinda Street, as well as Perry's Willard School, which is also nonextant. (*Ibid.*:83)

Proudfoot and Bird

Designed by the noted Des Moines firm of Proudfoot and Bird, the Hotel Pattee, located at 1108-1116 Willis Avenue, provides a fine example of Classical Revival architecture as applied to an hotel. Completed in 1913, the facade of this edifice is conceived within the tradition of the commercial storefront. Five of these units are present, with the central unit providing the main entrance to the hotel. The fenestration of the upper two floors--with two windows situated within each of these units--and the heavy brackets under the cornice reinforce the feeling of these five units. This design helps integrate this large building into the surrounding streetscape. At the same time, the building also features strongly horizontal details, such as the cornice across the top of the facade and the cornice between the first and second floors. These architectural details help tie the facade's five units together as a whole. Other classically-influenced details, for example the cornice with its dentils and the windows with their keystone lintels, provide additional evidence of the classical influence on this building.

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Morrison & Company

Morrison & Company is a little-known firm. In 1914 the firm of Morrison & Thorne prepared the design for the New Lawn, an apartment building in North Des Moines and located at 1245 6th Avenue. The Morrison of that firm may be the same individual as associated with Morrison & Company.

The documentation of Morrison & Company's work in Perry--which includes the Security Savings Bank and the J. R. James Building--is contained in *The American Contractor* of 1913. Entries in this publication couple his name with that of J. Campbell and suggest that Campbell himself was an architect. This does not appear to be true. For example, in 1909, J. Campbell contracted with architect C. E. Eastman & Co. for a design for a 3-story, flat (or apartment) building to be built at 14th and Woodland Avenue in Des Moines. (*The American Contractor*, April 10, 1909) It stands to reason that Campbell would not contract work for which he was capable. John W. Campbell was a contractor-builder of Des Moines. He specialized in street construction and resided at 2422 Forest Drive in Des Moines. (Des Moines City Directory 1920:240, 1742)

Liebbe, Nourse, and Rasmussen

The Perry Carnegie Library was designed by Liebbe, Nourse, and Rasmussen, one of Iowa's leading architectural firms in the early Twentieth Century. The firm designed at least seven other public libraries in Iowa. They included Atlantic, Boone, Grinnell, Hampton, Iowa City, and Nevada, in addition to Perry. According to the National Register application for Perry's library:

Because the building occupies most of its site, it conveys a monumental feeling to the viewer far beyond its relatively small size. The architects also successfully solved a difficult site problem presented by the small, triangular-shaped city lot on which the building was to be erected. . . [The firm's] unusual design provided an efficient use of the irregularly-shaped city lot already chosen for the new library building. Situated at a key intersection in Perry's central business district, this building also provides an entrance feature to Perry's downtown. (Page 1996:8-11)

The Perry Carnegie Library shows the influence of Beaux Arts architecture on its design and calls attention to the considerable architectural skills of architects Liebbe, Nourse, and Rasmussen.

Oscar Wenderoth

Employed by the U.S. Post Office Department and working as a supervising architect from the nation's capital, Oscar Wenderoth is credited with the design for the U.S. Post Office building at 1219 Warford Street in Perry. Completed and first occupied in 1915, this building--with its hip roof clad with tile and

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multi-paned windows--is unlike any other building in the downtown. This anomaly can be explained by the fact that a post office is a public building. Serving many patrons, including commercial and domestic, the design of such a building should not be exclusive in the appearance it projects. As a federal building, a post office should also project the dignity of the U.S. Government.

The siting of this building and its landscaping, as well as its architectural design, are significant. Located on the edge of downtown Perry, this site stands in a transitional area between Perry's downtown district and one of the city's residential neighborhoods. This site was intended for the convenience of commercial and residential patrons. The design of the building itself--with its hipped roof and multi-paned windows--helps relate it visually to domestic architecture. The inclusion of a greenspace in front of the north and east elevations of the building provide further references to residential architecture. On the other hand, this building occupies most of its site. In this regard, the building is related visually to Perry's downtown commercial resources.

Donald M. McLennan

During the 1920s, younger architects entered the Perry scene. One of them, Donald M. McLennan, an architect of Des Moines, prepared the designs for several Perry businesses, including the Fair Store at 1117-1119 2nd Street. According to one newspaper account:

Donald M. McLennan, architect of Des Moines was hired by Mr. Frans to draw up the blue prints for the new Fair Store building. Mr. McLennan's ability as an artist and his extreme interest in the most minutest of details in construction and engineering as manifest in his designs makes him one of the most popular architects in this vicinity.

Besides the Fair Store building the Des Moines architect was employed to design the Daily Chief building, the second floor and entrance of the Bruce-McLaughlin building, the new Dallas County home, the Woodward School and the new Bruce-McLaughlin apartments. (Hamman Scrapbooks)

The fact that a local newspaper ranked architects according to popularity attests to an appreciable patronage of that profession by Perry's property owners. The newspaper also published a photograph of McLennan. (See Figure III-e.)

The Fair Store demonstrated McLennan's interest in engineering. His design included provisions for up-to-date mechanical systems. According to one newspaper account from 1928:

The lighting fixtures are of the latest approved models and offer the proper illumination needed for the big store.

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One of the most modern ventilation systems was installed. . . A huge fan, motor driven, placed in the rear of the basement sucks out all the impurities of the air, throwing it up a ventilating pipe where it is freed through the roof. Thus fresh pure air is kept circulating constantly throughout the building and the air is never allowed to become stale.

The electric system is a marvel of modern lighting methods. There will be no lights in the store which will cast a direct or glaring light into the eyes of customers. The light will be a soft diffused glow ample to light every corner and show case in the storeroom and giving maximum efficiency with a minimum of eye strain. (Hamman Scrapbooks)

Carl Hunter and Russell Parks

Carl Hunter and Russell Parks were architects based in Des Moines during the 1970s. Their relatively brief collaboration produced the design for the Kastrup-McCauley Building, located at 1313 2nd Street. Kastrup and McCauley is a firm of opticians. Their selection of Hunter and Parks to design this building continues a tradition in Perry to employ architects from Des Moines.

This building employs plate glass extensively for the design of its facade, which is set back from the standard facade line of commercial edifices along 2nd Street. The fixed canopy above this inset area, however, is aligned with that facade line and helps integrate the building into the surrounding streetscape.

Other Architects

Other architects also contributed to the designs of Perry's downtown. Some of these have been documented and others will surely be identified as further research into the history of Perry's downtown is undertaken.

Donald McLennan is one of those architects, who contributed to the upbuilding of downtown Perry. The *Perry Chief* building, located at 1321-1323 2nd Street, is his only design identified to date. The building was constructed in 1928. It features Spanish Revival styling, most noticeable in the arch of its main entrance and its embellishment with cast stone medallions. McLennan was based in Des Moines, Iowa. To date, little research has documented his career. McLennan's residence in Des Moines continued over a period of years. A front page story in the *Perry Chief* of 1928, announced the construction of that newspaper's new building and documents McLennan's residence in Des Moines. The 1943 directory lists his residence at 2521 Allison Avenue and his occupation as "architect." (City Directory 1943:438) McLennan's name does not appear in the 1954 city directory.

As further research uncovers more information about the development of downtown Perry, undoubtedly the names of more architects and their work will come to light.

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ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

Architectural style, one category of significance under National Register Criterion C, embraces buildings and structures whose design and construction call attention to the evolution of design and how it manipulates building materials, shapes, and spaces according to contemporary taste.

Numerous architectural styles have influenced the design of buildings in Perry's downtown. These influences include Late Victorian, Classical Revival, Prairie School, Commercial Style, Period Revivals, Art Deco, and Art Moderne. Each of these influences is discussed below.

Late Victorian

Late Victorian designs in Perry are restricted in number. While numerous examples were constructed, many have fallen over the years to fire. Typical characteristics of the Late Victorian influence in Perry include the use of dark-colored brick, decorative hood molds above the upper floor windows, other decorative embellishments, such as the names of buildings worked in permanent materials and situated near the top of the facade, and decorative cornices worked in brick.

The following list identifies Late Victorian designs in downtown Perry:

LATE VICTORIAN DESIGNS

| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Notes</u> |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Wimmer Block | 1107-1111 2nd St. | Elaborate hood molds & cast-stone sills. |
| Perry Granite | 1015 Railroad St. | Brickworked cornice w/corbels, exposed I-beam facade support. |
| O'Malley Block | 111-113 Warford St. | Cornice, pilasters separating 3-bay facade. Later Art Deco 1st floor storefront now significant. |
| International Order of Odd Fellows | 1012 2nd St. | Cornice, brick-worked pilasters, segmental arches, tall & narrow windows, dark-colored brick. |
| Commercial Block | 1118-1120 2nd St. | Cornice w/dentils, segmental arches above 2nd fl. windows, dark colored brick. |
| Citizens State Bank Block | 1122-1124 2nd St. | Brick-worked cornice, curved corner, segmental arches & hood molds, stone trimwork w/decorative detailing, dark-colored brick. |

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| Name of Property | Address | Notes |
|------------------|-------------------|---|
| Breed Block | 1210-1216 2nd St. | Cornice, segmental arches & hood molds above upper windows, stone trimwork, dark-colored brick. |
| Commercial Block | 1218-1220 2nd St. | Cast-stone hood molds above upper windows, I-beam between 1st & 2nd floors. |

Classical Revival

The presence of Classical Revival styling is prominent in Perry. Many new buildings were constructed in the downtown during the last years of the Nineteenth Century and the first decades of the Twentieth. Most of these business houses were influenced by Classical Revival styling, because that taste held popular sway during this period of time.

The characteristics of the Classical Revival influence in Perry include plain exterior surfaces, restrained cornices at the top of facades, keystone hood molds above upper floor windows, and the employment of light-colored brick for the body of buildings. Sometimes windows feature classically-inspired configurations, such as lattice-configured windows or fanlights. Buildings are also frequently embellished with simple decorative trimwork fabricated in brick of a contrasting color from the body of the building. This trimwork includes cornices, dentils, belt courses, hood molds, and quoins. Often the presence of a brickworked frieze accents the cornice of these Classical Revival-influenced buildings. The Chandler Block, located at 1213-1315 2nd Street, and the O'Malley Building, at 1217 2nd Street, feature such decorative detailing.

The list on the following page identifies buildings in downtown Perry influenced by Classical Revival styling:

CLASSICAL REVIVAL DESIGNS

| Name of Property | Address | Design Characteristics |
|----------------------------------|--------------|---|
| Dignan's "Double Header" Grocery | 1315 2nd St. | Cornice tightly integrated into facade, light-colored brick. |
| Paul Block | 1219 2nd St. | Cornice, pedimented windows, (2nd fl.), arched windows w/keystones contrasting light- & dark-colored brick. |
| O'Malley Building | 1217 2nd St. | Cornice, frieze, light-colored brick. |

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| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Design Characteristics</u> |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Chandler Block | 1213-1215 2nd St. | Simple cornice, frieze, restrained hood, molds, light-colored brick. |
| B. & P. Order of Elks Building | 1211 2nd St. | Classically-inspired pediment, decorative details tightly integrated into body of building. |
| Shortley Building | 1209 2nd St. | Keystone hood molds, light-colored brick. |
| Bailey & Robinson Block | 1205-1207 2nd St. | Classical-influenced hood molds, restrained cornice. |
| L. D. Gamble Block | 1201-1203 2nd St. | Keystone hood molds on second fl., emphasis on symmetry, denticulated belt course between 1st & 2nd fls., brickwork on 1st fl. redolent of a stone base. |
| Jones Block | 1214-1216 Willis Ave. | Restrained cornice & denticulation, light-colored brick, emphasis on symmetry. |
| Perry Carnegie Library (NRHP) | 1123 Willis Ave. | Brick quoins, cornice, keystone arched entrance & Roman curia-type window panes, 1st fl. elevated above grade, light-colored brick. Also classified as a Beaux Arts design. |
| First National Bank | 1122 Willis Ave. | Brick quoins, cornice, keystone hood molds, 1st fl. elevated above facade, light-colored brick. |
| Hotel Pattee | 1108-1116 Willis Ave. | Pronounced cornice, keystone hood molds, light-colored brick. |
| Commercial Block | 1104-1106 Willis Ave. | Restrained cornice. |
| Security Savings Bank | 1100-1102 Willis Ave. | Elaborate cast concrete details, including cornice keystone hood molds, and pedimented entrance; light-colored brick; 1st fl. elevated above grade. |
| Dilenbeck Block | 1211-1213 Warford St. | Restrained cornice, brick quoins, keystone hood molds. |

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| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Design Characteristics</u> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Northwestern Bell Telephone Company | 1215 Warford St. | Precast concrete details, including hood molds & door surrounds, restrained cornice, light-colored brick. |
| United States Post Office | 1219 Warford St. | Fanlight windows, arched bays, brickworked frieze, light-colored brick. |
| Commercial Block | 1110-1112 2nd St. | Cornice with pronounced corbels, 2nd fl. hood molds & belt course, transitional Classical Revival in use of light-colored brick. |
| Rex Theatre Building | 1300 2nd St. | Restrained cornice and window treatment, smooth exterior surfaces, light-colored brick. |
| Grand Opera House | 1310-1312 2nd St. | Restrained cornice, pilasters with classically-inspired capitals. |
| Resser Building | 1014 2nd St. | Transitional example from Late Victorian |
| Pefley Building | 1016 2nd St. | Transitional example from Late Victorian |

As a whole, most of these buildings obtain architectural interest because of their plain and simple designs, embellished by brickwork in contrasting colors (as noted above and below). When buildings possess greater architectural detailing--such as the Grand Opera House--the reasons for this architectural display can be found in the purpose of the building. For example, the Grand Opera House was designed to serve in Perry as a temple for culture. Its prominent central entrance flanked by pilasters with capitals contributed to that image.

Prairie School

Although the influence of the Prairie School is limited in Perry, several commercial examples stand in the downtown. The J. C. Penney Company building, located at 1121-1123 2nd Street, features strong horizontal elements above its store windows. The Leonard Building, located at 1305 2nd Street, also features horizontal elements in its cornice, as well as square-shaped detailing, which further accentuates a horizontal feeling. These buildings call attention to the fact that Perry entrepreneurs were receptive to new architectural ideas.

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PRAIRIE SCHOOL DESIGNS

| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Design Characteristics</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Leonard Building | 1305 2nd Street | Brickworked cornice features unusual horizontal bands, accented by cast concrete square-shaped details, which further emphasize the building's linear feeling. |
| J. C. Penney Company | 1121-1123 2nd Street | Strong horizontal elements in the upper storefront, including deep cornice, capped with parapet with cornerposts and long centrally-placed plaque. |

Commercial Style

The Commercial Style has a wide-spread influence in Perry. Its most pronounced feature is a brickworked plaque above the building's storefront. The simplicity of the Commercial Style lent itself to many different types of commercial structures, including stores, automobile garages, service businesses, and equipment dealers. Popular during the 1920s and extending in some instances into the 1940s, this influence held sway over a long period of time in Perry. The number of remaining examples in downtown Perry today is somewhat belied by those which have been lost to fire over the years. The straightforward designs of the facades of these buildings have also lent themselves easily to remodeling, another reason fewer remain today than might be expected.

The following list identifies buildings in downtown Perry influenced by the Commercial Style:

COMMERCIAL STYLE DESIGNS

| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Design Characteristics</u> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Elsasser Building | 1319 2nd St. | Corbels at cornice relate to Late Victorian traditions. |
| Ainley Building | 1118 Willis Ave. | Brickworked panel above store-windows, restrained cornice. |
| Taylor Block | 1211-1215 Willis Ave. | Horizontal elements, dark-colored brick. Could be classified as eclectic. |
| Bruce Building | 807 Railroad St. | Plaque above front, precast concrete detailing, nice example of Commercial Style used for auto garage. |

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| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Design Characteristics</u> |
|-------------------------|----------------|---|
| Glass Electric Building | 1320 2nd St. | Late example, brickworked plaque above store-windows. |

Period Revival

Popular primarily in the 1920s and early 1930s, Period Revival styling was employed in Perry mostly for residential architecture. Several subcategories of this styling appear in the community. All seek to emulate earlier European or southwestern United States architecture. Of the two identified examples in the city's downtown, it should be noted that each of these examples is located near its edges. The small scale of these buildings and their references to domestic design help them blend into the surrounding residential sections of the community.

The following list identifies buildings in downtown Perry influenced by Period Revival styles and includes the subcategory of their influence:

PERIOD REVIVAL DESIGNS

| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Design Characteristics</u> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|--|
| <i>Perry Chief Building</i> | 1321-1323 2nd St. | Mediterranean Revival influence in use of pre-cast medallions, outset entrance & arched doorway. |
| Arveson Service Station | 1223 Willis Ave. | Tudor Revival influence in use of steeply pitched gables, Tudor-arched doors, picturesque footprint. |

Art Deco

By the 1930s, when Art Deco design began to influence architecture in downtown Perry, most of the business district had been improved with buildings. The influences which do appear generally are by way of facade remodelings. These typically addressed the first floor storefront and avoided alterations to the upper floor or floors.

Art Deco designs focus on geometric designs and the use of new materials, such as aluminum and Carrara-type glass. These materials give a smooth and hard surface to exterior walls. Art Deco also employs dramatic geometric shapes, frequently constructed in materials of contrasting color, which provide further bold notes.

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The redesigned storefronts of these remodeled buildings have now achieved architectural significance in their own right. Resources which possess such elements should be carefully evaluated for preservation.

The following list identifies buildings in downtown Perry influenced by the Art Deco style:

ART DECO DESIGNS

| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Design Characteristics</u> |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---|
| Commercial Building | 1113 2nd St. | Carrara-type glass on storefront & strong geometric features. |
| Bruce Building | 921 Otley Ave. | Strong geometric detailing, including precast concrete & brickworked embellishments & fin-shaped dividers between the 2nd fl. fenestration. |
| O'Malley Block | 111-113 Warford St. | Carrara-type glass on storefront, metal canopy w/streamlined design. Second floor retains Late Victorian elements. |

Art Moderne

Following World War II, Iowa and the nation began the conversion from a wartime to a peace-time economy. With Perry's prospects for continued railroad and retail sector prosperity, a considerable amount of new construction was undertaken. Much of this work was influenced by Art Moderne styling. This influence included the employment of pre-cast concrete elements, smooth surfaces, streamlined detailing (rounded corners, for example), the use of metal canopies, nontraditional window configurations, and the use of opaque glass block.

Some storefronts in Perry were probably remodeled and updated by Art Moderne alterations. Because the style has now achieved architectural interest in its own right, buildings which possess such elements should be carefully evaluated for preservation.

The list on the following page identifies buildings in downtown Perry influenced by the Art Moderne style:

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Art MODERNE DESIGNS

| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Design Characteristics</u> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Harbach Building | 1210 Willis Ave. | Pre-cast stone veneer, opaque glass block, streamlined surfaces. |
| Ross Building | 1212 Willis Ave. | Pre-cast stone veneer, opaque glass block, streamlined surfaces. |
| Wheelwright Oil Co. | 1228 Otley Ave. | Pre-cast stone veneer, opaque glass block, streamlined surfaces. |
| Harbach Building (F. W. Woolworth) | 1104-1108 2nd St. | Pre-cast stone veneer, streamlined surfaces, glass bulkheads. |

Conclusion

From these lists, it can be seen that each of the major architectural styles of the late Nineteenth and early to mid-Twentieth Century have influenced to some extent or another the architectural design of downtown Perry. What does this say about the entrepreneurs who erected them? One conclusion is that these individuals were not hidebound by the past and quite willing to try something new. These entrepreneurs also recognized and valued the use of architecture to differentiate their places of business from others. This differentiation could be achieved through the employment of a new architectural style, and Perry merchants readily chose new architectural ideas.

BUILDING MATERIALS

Building materials play a significant role in the architectural design of Perry's downtown district. Perry's excellent railroad connections allowed the ready importation of building materials from across the region, the state, and (when cost was not a factor) the nation. These materials included brick, wood, concrete, stone, and metal. The Perry Brick and Tile factory is also known to have provided locally-fired brick for commercial buildings in the city.

Brick

Brick is the most important building material in downtown Perry. This material takes on many different colors, textures, and combinations of colors and textures. When coupled with other masonry products--mortar color, mortar texture, mortar joints, trimbrick color, trimbrick texture, stone trimwork, precast stone trimwork, and precast concrete trimwork--the possibilities for variation are near limitless.

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The following table lists some of the many ways, in which brick color and texture have been employed to enrich the streetscape of downtown Perry:

BRICK PRODUCTS IN DOWNTOWN PERRY

| Address | Face Brick | | Trim Brick | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|----------|----------------|---------|
| | Color | Texture | Color | Texture |
| 1123 Willis | beige | smooth | N/A | N/A |
| 1010 2nd | medium brown | smooth | N/A | N/A |
| 1012 2nd | dark orange-red | smooth | dark red | smooth |
| 1014 2nd | light orange | smooth | light orange | rough |
| 1016 2nd | beige | smooth | N/A | N/A |
| 1018 2nd | mottled orange | smooth | ivory | rough |
| 1020-22 2nd | dark brown light brown | smooth | purple | smooth |
| 1024 2nd | light orange | smooth | dark red | rough |
| 1220 Willis | beige/brown | rough | N/A | N/A |
| 1214-16 Willis | mottled red | smooth | orange/red | rough |
| 1211-13 Willis | purple | rough | mottled orange | smooth |
| 1100-02 Willis | mottled red | rough | N/A | N/A |
| 1104 Willis | brown paint | rough | N/A | N/A |
| 1106 Willis | mottled brown & purple | rough | N/A | N/A |
| 1108-16 Willis | mottled brown & purple | rough | N/A | N/A |
| 1118 Willis | mottled orange & orange red | striated | N/A | N/A |
| 1122 Willis | orange | rough | N/A | N/A |

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| Address | Face Brick | | Trim Brick | |
|----------------|------------------------|----------|-------------------------------|---------|
| | Color | Texture | Color | Texture |
| 1124 Willis | orange flecked w/black | smooth | purple-maroon flecked w/black | smooth |
| 1110-12 Willis | light brown | smooth | N/A | N/A |
| 1118 Willis | mottled red & purple | striated | N/A | N/A |

Several resources in downtown Perry illustrate the dramatic effect, which can result from the use of face brick of light color juxtaposed with that of dark color. For example, the Gamble Block at 1201-1203 2nd Street employs a purple-colored brick for the building's first floor, while the upper two floors are faced with a yellow-colored brick. The Brown Block at 1024 2nd Street and the Myrtle Building at 1209 Willis Avenue employ a similar juxtaposition of purple and yellow brick, each employed for large portions of their facade walls. This dramatic effect is further heightened when the face brick of one color possesses a contrasting surface texture with that of the other. For example, the purple brick in the Gamble Block is rough-faced, while the yellow brick is smooth faced. Such strong color and texture juxtapositions prove that the selection of these materials was conscious and not accidental. These contrasts also make strong visual contributions to the streetscape, further heightened by the fact that the Gamble Block and the Brown Block are situated at the intersection of two streets and possesses double facades.

Wood

During the early period of Perry's history, wood provided the dominant building material for commercial architecture. For example, D. J. Pattee's Store, the first commercial enterprise in the community, was constructed of wood.

In spite of these early predilections, many merchants in Perry sought to house their businesses in "permanent" buildings. Permanent meant brick. Little stone was employed. Although many wooden commercial buildings were erected in downtown Perry, none survives. This comes as little surprise, given the city's history of devastating fires.

Concrete

Various forms of concrete have enjoyed popularity for commercial architecture in Perry. It was used for both decorative and structural purposes.

The Breed Block, located at 1210-1218 2nd Street, employs precast concrete for window sills, some lintels, and decorative hood molds above the third floor windows. Other buildings in downtown Perry

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feature precast concrete or concrete trimwork. The Perry Carnegie Library at 1123 Willis Avenue is a fine example. The use of this material lends a feeling of dignity to these buildings.

Concrete block has been locally manufactured in Perry. Originally known as the Cement Block Products, this Perry firm manufactured concrete building block. It was not successful and ceased operations in bankruptcy. H. M. Shively, the receiver, sold his interest in the property to C. Durant Jones about 1912. Jones was a Perry entrepreneur, sometime newspaper editor, avowed Prohibitionist, and politician.

According to one local historian, Jones:

started the manufacture of various products in his auto company building. He purchased the Cement Block Products business from receiver H. M. Shively. Along with this went nine lots the company owned on Railroad Street, eight of them utilized for the building and storage yards. Jones also got the small parcel of land at the corners of Otley and Railroad streets in the angle of the electric light plant and Waters garage

On May 15, 1913, Jones announced that a new garage was to be built on Railroad Street just north of the Shotwell and Davis plant. Ground was broken on May 17 for the building just south of the cement works. The next venture was to build concrete residences. By December, he had twenty-six buildings under construction and more than 100 men on the payroll. He signed a contract with Henry Wiese for the construction of a two-story block building on the west side of Wiese's lot on Lucinda, opposite Lester's Livery barn. Along with this there was also the Jones Realty Company. (Patterson:35)

The Jones Building, located at 809 Railroad Street, is a good example of a commercial building constructed of concrete block. The 1903 year of this building's construction is memorialized in a precast concrete plaque near the top of the facade, along with the name "Jones." Bruce's Snow Ball Grocery, located at 1301 2nd Street, is another example of a commercial building constructed of concrete block. Although not situated, strictly speaking, in downtown Perry, the former College Building at 1305 Otley Avenue is another good example of an edifice constructed of concrete block. It was built by C. D. Jones in 1912.

Given Perry's history of devastating fires, it might seem peculiar that concrete block never became popular for commercial buildings. Buildings constructed of this material projected a heavy and austere mien to the viewer. After its initial popularity around the turn of the Twentieth Century, concrete block enjoyed only a limited use in Perry, except for foundations. C. Durant Jones relocated to Texas from Perry in 1928. (Patterson:34) It is likely that his concrete block business had ceased operations before that time.

Stone

Although stone is a durable and attractive building material, its use in Perry has been limited. This is not to say that stone is absent from the architecture of downtown Perry, but it did not achieve the prominence,

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which it enjoyed in other Iowa towns. The Citizens State Bank Block, located at 1122-1124 2nd Street uses stone for decorative purposes in a belt course between the first and second floor of its facade and as a lintel material. Some of this stone is rough-faced and some is carved with foliated detail.

The reasons for the restricted use of stone as a building material in Perry are not presently clear. The *Andreas Atlas* of 1875 touted the abundance of sandstone and limestone in Dallas County.

Next to a coal mine, as an essential element in the improvement and development of a county, is the article of good building stone. Indeed, where timber is plenty; the former may be the most conveniently dispensed with. In having an abundance of good building stone distributed in quarries throughout the county, along nearly all the streams, Dallas County is highly favored. Both sandstone and limestone are found, though the former is principally used for building purposes. It is easily quarried, readily dressed, and found to be durable. (*Andreas Atlas*:475)

On the other hand, the standard histories of Perry do not mention local quarries. Stone was expensive to import from the outside, and cost was probably a factor. The fact that Perry was not a county seat may have contributed to this phenomenon. Courthouses and other public buildings frequently employed stone as a building material, but such a building did not appear in Perry to serve as a model for many years.

Metal

Metal has a restricted use as a building material in downtown Perry. Most of Perry's commercial buildings were constructed after cast iron had peaked in popularity as a building material. Cast iron consequently was used only to a limited extent in Perry. Other uses of metal are mostly for internal structural purposes or for decorative embellishments. For example, the cornices of the Hotel Pattee and the Breed Block feature pressed metal components. The International Order of Odd Fellows building at 1012 2nd Street features the monogram of that organization worked in sheet metal and located near the top of the building.

In the 1930s and 1940s, metal returned to favor to a limited extent as a building material. The McCarthy Auto Garage, located at 813 Railroad Street, provides an example of the Quonset-type building, which had become popular nationally at this now. Although now clad with cover-up siding on the facade, this garage was built in 1938. Corrugated metal was also employed at the top of the facade on the Ross Building at 1212 Willis Avenue. Metal was also used in conjunction with glass to impart Art Moderne styling to buildings. Examples include the commercial building at 1113 2nd Street, the O'Malley Block at 111-113 Warford Street, and the marquee at the Rex Theatre at 1300 2nd Street.

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Perry Brick and Tile

Perry Brick and Tile was a local manufacturer of brick products. It began operations circa 1902. (Patterson:183) Little information is presently available concerning this firm. As its name implies, agricultural drainage tile probably figured prominently in its product line. The firm also manufactured face brick and common brick.

The following resources are documented as having been constructed with building materials fabricated by the Perry Brick and Tile:

PERRY BRICK AND TILE FACTORY

| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Notes</u> |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| O'Malley Block | 111-113 Warford St. | Reported constructed with first lot of bricks fired by the firm. |
| Municipal Fire Dept. Engine House | Nonextant | Listed NRHP, demolished in 1978. |

Source: Patterson, *A Town Called Perry*, pp. 133 and 183.

According to one source:

The first kiln of bricks at the new Perry Brick and Tile Factory was opened. These bricks were fine and withstood a thorough test. C. Modlin said they were as good a brick as would ever be seen in Perry. The first lot of bricks was used in the O'Malley building. (Patterson:183)

As more is learned about Perry Brick and Tile, this information can be used to assess the firm's contributions to the architecture of downtown Perry.

Conclusion

Downtown Perry's extensive variety of brick and associated masonry products provides an insight into the commercial life of the community during the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries. Local entrepreneurs were not hidebound by the past. As with architectural style, they were quite willing to try something new. These individuals recognized and valued the use of architecture to differentiate their places of business from others. The selection of new colors of brick, new textures of brick, and new kinds of

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masonry details could make new and individual statements about the commercial enterprises these buildings housed and at a relatively inexpensive cost. The extensive variety of brick and related masonry products surviving in downtown Perry today witnesses to this subtle but enduring form of advertisement.

BUILDING TYPES

Historic commercial buildings in Iowa typically conform to several patterns as to their size and as such can be classified by type. These types include the one-room commercial building, the commercial block, and the nontraditional building.

The one-room commercial building and the commercial block share many architectural features in common. These characteristics include a common facade line sited directly abutting the pedestrian right-of-way; large expanses of glass at the storefront level; and the use of permanent building materials, such as brick, stone, and concrete. When the one-room commercial building possesses more than one story, its upper floor windows are situated at approximately the same height as other multi-story edifices, providing a rhythm to the streetscape. Nontraditional commercial buildings often lack some or all of these shared architectural features. For this reason, they stand out within the streetscape and detract from its visual uniformity.

One-Room Commercial Building

The one-room commercial building possesses a facade one-room in width and one or two stories in height. The width of the facade varies in Perry but generally measures about 25 feet. The name "one-room" does not necessarily mean that these buildings possess only one room but that they are only one-room in width.

The following table lists one-room commercial buildings in downtown Perry:

ONE-ROOM COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Notes</u> |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Shortley Building | 1209 2nd St. | 2-story. |
| Northwestern Bell Telephone Co. | 1215 Warford St. | 1-story, raised first floor for telephone equipment in basement. |
| Council Building | 1010 2nd St. | 1-story. |
| Perry Granite | 1015 Railroad St. | 1-story. |
| B. & P. Order of Elks Building | 1211 2nd St. | 3-story. |

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| Name of Property | Address | Notes |
|------------------------------------|------------------|---|
| International Order of Odd Fellows | 1012 2nd St. | Side entrance to upper floors, 3-story. |
| Commercial Bldg. | 1219 2nd St. | 2-story. |
| O'Malley Building | 1217 2nd St. | 3-story. |
| Commercial Bldg. | 1018 2nd St. | 2-story. |
| Commercial Bldg. | 1016 2nd St. | 2-story. |
| Commercial Bldg. | 1014 2nd St. | 3-story. |
| Fox Lunch | 1318 2nd St. | 1-story, small. |
| Glass Electric Building | 1320 2nd St. | 1-story. |
| Elsasser Building | 1319 2nd St. | 1-story, possesses 2 small rooms within one-room format. |
| Snowball Market & Grocery | 1301 2nd St. | 1-story. |
| Commercial Building | 1113 2nd St. | 2-story. |
| Ainley Building | 1118 Willis Ave. | 1-story. |
| Ross Building | 1212 Willis Ave. | 1-story. |
| Bruce Building | 807 Railroad St. | 1-story. |
| First National Bank | 1124 Willis Ave. | 2-story, rich detail. |
| Commercial Bldg. | 1122 Willis Ave. | 2-story. |

Compound one-room commercial buildings also exist. These buildings are 1-story in height and vary the standard one-room format by doubling or tripling it. For example, the facade of the *Perry Chief* building possesses a frontage of 50 feet, double the standard width for a one-room commercial building Perry.

The table on the following page lists compound one-room commercial buildings in downtown Perry:

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COMPOUND ONE-ROOM COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Notes</u> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Perry Chief Building</i> | 1321-1323 2nd St. | 2-room width facade, 1-story. |
| J. C. Penney Co. | 1121-1123 2nd St. | 2-room width facade, 1-story. |
| The Fair Store | 1117-1119 2nd St. | 2-room width facade, 1-story. |
| Harbach Building | 1106-1108 2nd St. | 3-room width facade, 1-story. |

Commercial Block

The commercial block possesses a facade two-rooms in width, two or more stories in height, and a unified architectural design (at least as originally conceived). The commercial block differs from the compound one-room commercial building by possessing two or more floors.

The table on the following page lists commercial blocks in downtown Perry:

COMMERCIAL BLOCKS

| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Notes</u> |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Dignan's "Double Header" Grocery | 1313-1315 2nd St. | 2-room width facade, 2-story, local name for building type. |
| Mitchell Block | 1221-1223 2nd St. | 2-room width facade, 2-story. |
| Commercial Block | 1217-1219 2nd St. | 2-room width facade, entrance to upper floor at side, 2 story. |
| Chandler Block | 1213-1215 2nd St. | 2-room width facade, entrance to upper floor at side, 2-story. |
| Bailey & Robinson Block | 1205-1207 2nd St. | 2-room width facade, 2-story. |
| Jones Block | 1214-1216 Willis Ave. | 2-room width facade, 2-story. |
| Jones Block | 809-NEED Railroad St. | 2-room width facade, 2-story. |
| First National Bank | 1122 Willis Ave. | 2-room width facade, 2-story. |

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| <u>Name of Property</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Notes</u> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Commercial Block | 1104-1106 Willis Ave. | Restrained cornice |
| Dilenbeck Block | 1211-1213 Warford St. | 2-room width facade, 2-story. |
| Grand Opera House | 1310-1312 2nd St. | 2-room width facade, 2-story. |
| Wimmer Block | 1107-1111 2nd St. | 3-room width facade, 2-story. |
| O'Malley Block | 111-113 Warford St. | 2-room width facade, entrance to upper floor at side, 2-story. |
| Commercial Block | 1110-1112 2nd St. | 2-room width facade, 2-story. |
| Commercial Block | 1118-1120 2nd St. | 2-room width facade, 2-story. |
| Commercial Block | 1218-1220 2nd St. | 2-room width facade, 2-story. |
| Taylor Block | 1211-1213 Willis Ave. | 2-room width facade, 2-story. |

Double width facades were recognized historically in Perry. According to one local historian:

Many years ago John Dignan opened a grocery store at 1315 Second St., and because of its double width was called the Double header. (Hastie Perry:144)

The same author occasionally employs terms such as "double store," "double space store," and "double width room" to describe the same phenomenon. (*Ibid.*:146, 148) "Double" was clearly a local term.

Compound commercial blocks also exist. These resources resemble the standard commercial block but possess super-size. For example, the Hotel Pattee possesses a 5-room width facade. The Breed Block possessed originally a 6-room width facade. Some other variations also occur, like the L. D. Gamble Block.

The table on the following page lists compound commercial blocks in downtown Perry:

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COMPOUND COMMERCIAL BLOCKS

| Name of Property | Address | Notes |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Hotel Pattee | 1108-1116 Willis Ave. | 5-room width facade. |
| Breed Block | 1202-1216 2nd St. | 6-room width facade on west elevation, (south 2-units nonextant) |
| L. D. Gamble Block | 1201-1203 2nd St. 1114-1116 Warford St. (wing) (double facade, east & south elevations) | 2-room width facade on east elevation, plus 1-room wing on south elevation. |
| Citizens State Bank | 1122-1124 2nd St. 1209 Warford St. (wing) (double facade, west & north elevations) | 2-room width facade on west elevation, plus 1-room wing on north elevation. |

The influence of the standard commercial block was such, that the compound commercial block became the subject of conversation. For example, one local historian described the now nonextant Wimmer & Williams Block (located on the northeast corner of Willis Avenue and 2nd Street) in this fashion:

The contract for the new building was let to A. A. Roberts in July 1907. Plans called for three store rooms on the first floor, but with a different arrangement. The corner room on Willis and Second was the smallest and the other two were "L"-shaped. The building was completed in 1907, with the Bulkley brothers installed in the north room in January 1908. Total cost for the new building was more than \$35,000. (Patterson:133)

The Wimmer & Williams Block was destroyed by fire in 1945. A new building, the Harbach Block, was constructed on the site in 1946. It retained the L-shaped floorplan described above.

Other Building Types

Nontraditional commercial buildings, that is, those, which do not conform to the types described above, also exist in downtown Perry. New commercial services or retail products sometimes necessitated new types of buildings. For example, gasoline stations required a pump island, perhaps a canopy and/or a garage room, and an office. The Whiteway Oil Company, located on the southeast corner of 1st Avenue and Warford Street, is an example of this new type of nontraditional commercial building in downtown Perry. It was constructed in 1928.

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III. Commercial Architectural Resources

The Perry State Bank is another example of a nontraditional commercial building. It features an irregular setback from the street and the amenities of a tree and grassy area nontraditional to Perry's urban environment.

NONTRADITIONAL COMMERCIAL RESOURCES

| Name of Property | Address | Notes |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Perry State Bank | 1202-1204 2nd St. | 1-story, diagonally sited on lot, modern landscaping. |
| Kastrup-McCauley Building | 1313 2nd St. | 1-story, modern building, makes reference to traditional facade setback, & designed as a one-room commercial building. |
| Whiteway Oil Company | 1st Ave., s.e. cor. Warford St. | Much altered. |

The irregular platting of the southern portion of Perry's downtown encouraged to some extent the construction of nontraditional buildings. There, the irregularly-shaped city lots lent themselves to unusual building footprints and designs.

Perry Lodge Halls

In addition to the typology discussed above, lodge halls form another type of building in downtown Perry. The shape of these buildings, which varies from the standard commercial buildings discussed above, stems from the different purposes these buildings were designed to serve.

Lodge halls were usually constructed to provide a meeting site. The ceremonial rituals of fraternal and sororitical organizations often required large interior spaces. The members of these organizations were often leaders in the financial, mercantile, and professional circles of a city. With considerable financial capability, these organizations often constructed a lodge hall at least partially as a business venture. The first floor would be rented out to a business, while the upper floor or floors would be reserved for lodge functions. These halls posed new challenges for architectural design. For example, the lodge room required a large clear space. How would the roof be supported? Lodge halls in Perry display several peculiar architectural characteristics within the commercial architecture of Perry. These halls are one-room in width and possess 3-stories in height. This design endows these buildings with a strongly vertical appearance. This feeling is altogether in keeping with the Late Victorian styling, which these buildings also show. Several lodge halls were built in downtown Perry by fraternal orders. They include the International Order of Odd Fellows at 1012 2nd Street and the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks at 1211 2nd Street. The local Masonic order in Perry chose to lease rooms in the Breed Block.

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III. Commercial Architectural Resources

Automobile Era Related Resources

Automobile-related facilities began to appear in Perry during the second decade of the Twentieth Century. They too differ in form from Perry's standard commercial buildings. Auto-related facilities include automobile garages and service stations. The automobile garage provided motorists with automobile repair services. These facilities needed large, interior spaces for the storage of automobiles and parts and for repair benches. Some of these facilities were built within the tradition of the commercial building, as discussed above. For example, the Bruce Building, located at 807 Railroad Street, is a good example of a one-room commercial building. It shows the influence of the Commercial Style of architecture. Other automobile garages were built along different lines. The McCarthy Auto Garage at 813 Railroad Street, for example, features a Quonset-hut design. The locations of the automobile garages are also diagnostic of this new architectural form. Typically, they are situated on the edges of Perry's downtown district. Automobile garages generally require more land than other kinds of commercial enterprises, and land on the fringes of the downtown was less expensive than close-into the downtown. These sites also helped lessened the congestion of downtown traffic.

Service stations were also usually located on the fringes of downtown Perry. Located at 1120 1st Street, the former Standard Gas Station was the first service station in Perry. Although originally constructed in 1917, it has been substantially altered. Service stations were a new architectural form. They quickly became a standard fixture in Iowa towns. These buildings required new architectural elements, including a driveway approach and perhaps a drive-under canopy and a repair bay. Frequently service stations were sited on the corners of street intersections. Such a site provided a ready access for motorist-customers from several different directions and facilitated vehicular in- and egress.

All of these new forms of commercial architecture posed new challenges for design.

Conclusion

For a county market center in Iowa, downtown Perry possesses a number of large commercial buildings. "Large" can be described by the number of three story buildings in the downtown, by the number of commercial blocks, by the number of compound one-room commercial buildings, and/or by the number of compound commercial blocks. Another way of describing this phenomenon is to say that commercial buildings of one-room width and one-story height are not common in Perry.

What conclusion can be drawn from this preponderance of large commercial resources in Perry's downtown? The material culture of downtown Perry architecture suggests that when an investor or investors chose to erect a commercial edifice in the community, the preference was to build a big one. This conclusion relates to the heavy investments and prosperity in the community during the early Twentieth Century.

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III. Commercial Architectural Resources

CONTRACTOR-BUILDER CONTRIBUTIONS

Contractor-builders are those individuals and firms that have undertaken the physical construction of buildings. In the Victorian era, contractor-builders often designed as well as constructed buildings. The decisions that these individuals make can influence the final product. Therefore, their contributions to building projects should be carefully evaluated. This is made difficult by the fact that information about their contributions is frequently undocumented.

As a preliminary step in the on-going research of this topic, the following list of documented contractor-builder projects in Perry is presented:

CONTRACTOR-BUILDER CONTRIBUTIONS TO DOWNTOWN PERRY

| <u>Contractor-Builder Name</u> | <u>Headquarters</u> | <u>Name of Resource</u> | <u>Date of Construction</u> | <u>Address of Resource</u> |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Modlin & Company | Perry, IA | Municipal Fire Station | 1904 | Nonextant |
| J. J. Courtney | N/A | Willard School | 1900 | Nonextant |
| Capen & Nath | Perry, IA | Naylor House | c. 1917 | 1701 Otley Ave. |
| Lippert Brothers | N/A | Ross Building | 1945 | 1212 Willis Ave. |
| D. Chrystie | Perry, IA | Bruce Building | 1930 | 921 Otley Ave. |
| Jacobsen & Steinbeck | N/A | Security Savings Bank | 1913 | 1100-1102 Willis Ave. |
| Kucharo Construction | Des Moines, IA | Harbach Building | 1946 | 1210 Willis Ave. |
| | Des Moines, IA | Harbach Building | 1946 | 1102 2nd St. |
| | Des Moines, IA | Harbach Building | 1946 | 1104 2nd St. |
| Bower & Bower | N/A | Kastrup-McCauley Building | 1965 | 1313 2nd St. |
| Courtney and Bolt | Perry, IA | Perry Carnegie Library | 1904 | 1123 Willis Ave. |
| David Grant | N/A | M.&St.L. Roundhouse | 1880 | Nonextant |
| David Grant | N/A | M.&St.L. Roundhouse | 1912 | Nonextant |
| A. A. Roberts | Perry, IA | Wimmer & Williams Block | 1907 | 1102-1106 2nd St./nonextant |
| | | First National Bank (remodeling) | c. 1906 | 1124 Willis Ave. |

* Jones relocated to Perry in December 1904 (Patterson:32), but this building includes the date "1903" in its plaque.

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III. Commercial Architectural Resources

The identification of other resources associated with these, as well as other contractor-builders in Perry, might provide yet another avenue for research, identification, evaluation, and National Register listings. The contributions of C. Durant Jones might prove particularly interesting.

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III. Commercial Architectural Resources

BOOMTOWN ON 2ND STREET

CIRCA 1913



Figure III-b

This view provides a companion piece to Figure III-a. It pictures downtown Perry looking north from Lucinda Street. Although the size of buildings in this view are generally smaller than to the south, at least three commercial blocks are present. Note how the business district tapers off in the northern reaches of 2nd Street. A stand of trees beyond the Grand Theatre marks several vacant lots. The street trees in the far distance signal the beginning of a residential section. A series of frame buildings, located in mid-distance on the left, were soon to be included in Perry's fire limits, a sign of progressive reform in Perry.

Source: Historic postcard view.

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III. Commercial Architectural Resources

BOOMTOWN ON 2ND STREET

CIRCA 1913



Figure III-a

This view of downtown Perry during boomtown days repays careful study. It pictures 2nd Street looking south from Lucinda Street circa 1913. (The following companion photograph pictures the intersection looking north.) Numerous 3-story commercial blocks and buildings attest to the vibrant life of the business district. The restrained lines of Classical Revival architecture are evident on many of the larger buildings. The multiple units of the Breed Block stand at the left. The choice of this intersection for these photographs demonstrate the emergence of 2nd Street as the primary corridor of commercial life in Perry.

Source: Historic postcard view.

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III. Commercial Architectural Resources

WIMMER & WILLIAMS BLOCK

CIRCA 1939



Figure III-c

Strategically located for commerce on the northeast corner of 2nd Street and Willis Avenue, the Wimmer & Williams Block was built in 1907 by contractor-builder A. A. Roberts. The keystone arches above its third story windows and restrained cornice and frieze call attention to the Classical Revival influence of its architectural design. The massive size of this building qualifies its classification as a compound commercial block and shows why Perry enjoyed a reputation for big commercial enterprises.

Although the Wimmer & Williams Block burned in 1945, the site was quickly redeveloped by a 1-story building in an Art Moderne-influenced design.

Source: Historic postcard view.

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III. Commercial Architectural Resources

WILLIS AVENUE

LOOKING NORTHEAST CIRCA 1914

WILLIS AVENUE
SHOWING PATTEE HOTEL
PERRY IOWA



Figure III-d

This view of Willis Avenue helps picture how that street redeveloped during Perry's boom during the early Twentieth Century. Although a series of 2-story, Late Victorian-styled, commercial buildings are present, they are dwarfed by new construction. The Classical Revival-influenced Hotel Pattee was completed in 1913. The Wimmer & Williams Block, located at the far right, was built in 1907. Its massive size anchors the commercially strategic intersection of 2nd Street and Willis Avenue.

Source: Historic postcard view.

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

III. Commercial Architectural Resources

DONALD M. McLENNAN, ARCHITECT

D. M. McLENNAN STORE ARCHITECT

DES MOINES MAN MADE BLUE
PRINTS FOR MANY OTHER
CITY AND COUNTY
BUILDINGS

Donald M. McLennan, architect of Des Moines was hired by Mr. Frans to draw up the blue prints for the new Fair Store building. Mr. McLennan's ability as an artist and his extreme interest in the most minutest of details in construction and engineering as manifest in his designs makes him one of the most popular architects in this vicinity.

Besides the Fair Store building the Des Moines architect was employed to design the Daily Chief building,

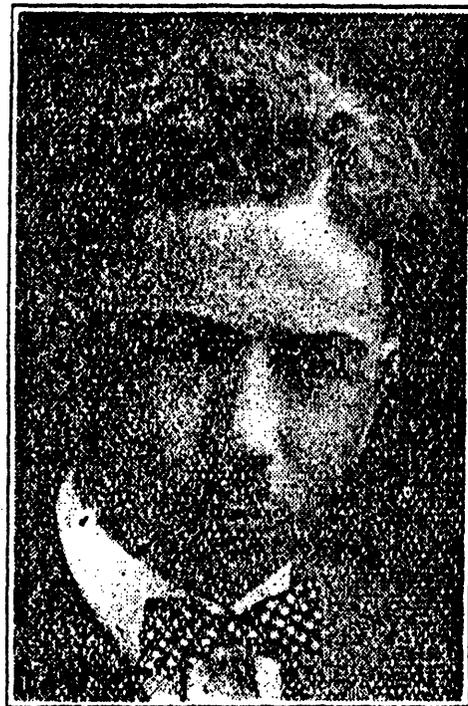


Figure III-e

Younger architects, like Donald M. McLennan, entered the Perry scene in the 1910s and 1920s. McLennan was particularly interested in "the most minutest of details in construction and engineering." In 1928 he prepared the design for the Fair Store at 1117-1119 2nd Street, as well as for other Perry and Dallas County commissions.

The Fair Store featured up-to-date ventilating and lighting systems.

Source: *Perry Chief* newspaper article from 1928, Hamman Scrapbooks.

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

F. Associated Property Types

(Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)

I. SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

The property type descriptions presented in this chapter are based on the results of the present historic and architectural survey of downtown Perry, Iowa, and the previous windshield survey of Perry (Page 1996). This windshield survey formed one portion of a "Planning for Preservation" project conducted in Perry in 1995-1996.

Comparatively little survey work had been conducted previously in the project area. There is presently one National Register property listed in Perry--the Perry Carnegie Library, located at 1123 Willis Avenue. This nomination was one result of the "Planning for Preservation" project mentioned above.

As a result of this survey project, Perry's downtown district was found eligible for nomination to the National Register. A series of individual resources were also identified as National Register eligible.

I. Property Type:

Districts, Buildings, Structures, Sites, and Features Associated with Building Downtown, circa 1880-circa 1948.

- a. **Description:** There is a variety of resources, which call attention to building downtown Perry, but each of the eligible resources will have a commercial association. Resources, which call attention to the early period of Perry's commercial development include commercial buildings clustered around and near The Triangle section of downtown Perry. Resources, which call attention to the emerging importance of 2nd Street as principal corridor of commerce in Perry, will be located along that street and oriented to it. Resources, which call attention to the South of Otley area, will be located in that section of Perry's downtown and will generally date somewhat later in time than the two other sections of the downtown. Resources will also include commercial blocks, compound commercial blocks, and compound commercial buildings, whose large size call attention to Perry's strong local economy during the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries. Resources constructed during Perry's boomtown years are also included in this historic context regardless of their size if other of their physical attributes are associated with this theme.

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b. Significance: Significance derives from a resource's ability to call attention to the evolution of commercial land use in downtown Perry, to the strength of the local economy, to Perry's status as a boomtown during the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries, to the community's experiences with fire and rebuilding in its aftermath, to architectural design, and to other expressions of downtown development as the result of that area's role as the heart of the community. Significance can also derive through other undertakings to improve the downtown--for example, the adoption of fire limits and the changes wrought on the physical environment by that municipal ordinance.

c. Registration Requirements:

Criterion A: Properties which reflect the significant patterns of commerce in downtown Perry, Iowa.

Criterion B: Properties that are directly associated with individuals who played a leading, pivotal, or important role in shaping the development of downtown Perry, Iowa, during this period. Although this project did not survey resources outside Perry's downtown district, Criterion B could be applied, under this historic context, to the dwelling places of significant individuals, who made significant contributions to that development.

Criterion C: Properties, which reflect significant commercial designs associated with retail, professional, and/or service enterprises located within the downtown district of Perry, Iowa. Also properties, which illustrate new commercial architecture, whose development was in response to new consumer goods, services, or needs.

Criterion D: Sites of nonextant properties, which contain intact subsurface deposits with good information potential concerning the material culture of identifiable resources, which made substantial contributions to the upbuilding of downtown Perry.

Integrity Considerations: Unless a property has lost most of the characteristics that convey a sense of time and place associated with the upbuilding of downtown Perry or no longer has the ability to provide important information with respect to spatial patterns, building type, construction technique, or other subject of scholarly interest within this context, it should be considered eligible.

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

d. Eligible or Potentially Eligible Properties:

Historic Districts

- * Downtown Perry Historic District

Individual Nominations

* Bruce's Snowball Market #1
921 Railroad Street

* Jones Business College
1305 Otley Avenue

Arveson Service Station/Perry Oil Company
1223 Willis Avenue

Livery Stable (more research required)
1226 Otley Avenue

Pattee House
1119 4th Street

* = Property being nominated with this MPD.

II. Property Type:

Districts, Buildings, Structures, Sites, and Features Associated with Transportation, circa 1880-circa 1948.

- a. **Description:** Very few resources directly associated with railroads remain extant, and those that do include a limited number of resource types. These resources were not surveyed in this project, which was restricted to commercial properties within Perry's downtown district. Local enterprises, directly associated with transportation, such as railroad facilities, bulk oil depots, stock yards, weigh-houses, and the like) were located outside the reconnaissance and intensive study area of this report. Perry's downtown district provides one resource, which does call attention to this historic theme. Downtown Perry was shaped in large part by the locations of railroad facilities in the community.

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b. Significance: Although there are few extant resources associated directly with the railroads and the interurban in Perry (those that remain take on added importance), Perry's downtown historic district calls attention to the magnetic power the railroads and railroad depots exerted over commercial development during the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries in Perry.

c. Registration Requirements:

Criterion A: Properties which reflect railroad or interurban mechanical necessities, engineering, and technology.

Criterion B: Properties that are directly associated with individuals who played a leading, pivotal, or important role in shaping the development of railroads and interurban surface transportation in Perry during this period.

Criterion C: Properties, which reflect industrial and engineering design associated with the technology of railroad or interurban machinery. Also properties, which illustrate new commercial architecture in downtown Perry.

Criterion D: Sites of nonextant properties, which contain intact subsurface deposits with good information potential concerning the material culture of identifiable railroad or interurban resources.

Integrity Considerations: Unless a property has lost most of the characteristics that convey a sense of time and place associated with railroads or the interurban or no longer has the ability to provide important information with respect to spatial patterns, building type, construction technique, or other subject of scholarly interest within this context, it should be considered eligible.

d. Eligible or Potentially Eligible Properties:

Historic Districts

- * Downtown Perry Historic District

Individual Nominations

- * Bruce's Snowball Market #1
921 Railroad Street

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* Jones Business College
1305 Otley Avenue

Weigh House
McColl Street

Arveson Service Station/Perry Oil Company
1223 Willis Avenue

Wheelwright Oil Company
1228 Otley Avenue

* = Property being nominated with this MPD.

III. Property Type:

Districts, Buildings, Structures, Sites, and Features Associated with the Commercial Architectural Resources, Downtown, Perry, Iowa, circa 1880-circa 1948.

- a. **Description:** Resources will consist exclusively of commercial buildings, although the upper floors often are often residential, both in their historical and present-day use. Buildings show the influences of a series of architectural styles, including Late Victorian, Classical Revival, Commercial Style, Moderne, and Art Deco. Each style contains variations, some of which can be classified as subtypes. Numerous architects practiced in Perry during this period, and a number of specific designs have been identified and credited to them. The same can be said concerning the city's many contractor-builders. Several important building types and variations on those types emerged as significant for commercial architecture in Perry. Each of the resources described above can seek to achieve, through the employment of a variety of brick building materials, a distinctive design.
- b. **Significance:** Significance can derive from a variety of ways in which commercial architecture was manifest during this period. It can derive from demonstrated influences of architectural styles. Significance can derive from associations with entities or individuals who made outstanding contributions to architectural design, such as architects and architect-builders, and the manner in which they effected local architectural taste through their designs and through their built structures. Significance can also derive from associations with important contractor-builders, constructing commercial properties, as well as from designs formally prepared by professional architects. Significance can also derive from building types important during this period, as well as new architectural forms, such as lodge halls, which emerged to fulfill new functions within the community. Significance can also derive from the use of building materials employed in a variety of combinations to achieve distinctive results.

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c. Registration Requirements:

Criterion A: Properties associated only with this context will not have significance under Criterion A.

Criterion B: Homes, offices, or studios that are directly associated with architects, important contractor-builders, or real estate developers, who played a leading, pivotal, or important role in shaping the development of downtown Perry during this period.

Criterion C: Eligible properties include standard building types that contribute to the distinctive character of downtown Perry, such as the one-room commercial building, the compound one-room commercial building, the commercial block and the compound commercial block. Eligible properties also include identified buildings, structures, and districts associated with individuals and/or firms that have made or constructed architecturally distinctive designs. Finally eligible properties include examples of commercial architecture which call attention to the widely varied use of building materials employed to achieve distinctive designs.

Criterion D: Sites of nonextant properties that contain intact buried deposits with good potential to yield, or may be likely to yield, information important to the understanding of commercial architecture in downtown Perry during this period.

Integrity Considerations: Alterations are acceptable if they are at least 50-years old, are compatible in design and materials with the original structure, are reversible, and do not detract from the historic design. Although vacant lots would not be counted within the inventory of contributing and noncontributing resources for historic districts, the significance of nonextant commercial buildings, which stood on lots presently unimproved, must be considered when evaluating the integrity of potential commercial historic districts.

d. Eligible or Potentially Eligible Properties:

Historic Districts

- * Downtown Perry Historic District

Individual Nominations

- * Bruce's Snowball Market #1
921 Railroad Street

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

* Jones Business College
1305 Otley Avenue

Wheelwright Oil Co.
1228 Otley Avenue

Arveson Service Station/Perry Oil Company
1228 Willis Avenue

Jones Building
809 Railroad Street

Perry Granite and Marble
1015 Railroad Street

* = Property being nominated with this MPD.

Important Note:

None of these lists of eligible or potentially eligible properties is inclusive. Because a property is not included on these lists does not necessarily mean that it is not eligible or potentially eligible.

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Downtown, Perry, Iowa.

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

(Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)

PROJECT HISTORY

This project was conducted by the Perry Historic Preservation Commission (PHPC) under a series of grant-in-aid agreements with the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI) through the Certified Local Government Grants Program (CLG). The primary objectives of this project were: #1) to conduct a reconnaissance survey of downtown Perry in order to establish boundaries of a potential historic district; #2) to conduct an intensive survey of that district (see Figure 1-1); and #3) to list such a district on the National Register of Historic Places. William C. Page, Public Historian of Des Moines, Iowa, served as consultant throughout both phases.

The first phase of the project addressed objectives #1 and #2. It began in July 1997 and was completed on July 31, 1998. The survey included examination and recording of historical and architectural dating from the period circa 1880-circa 1948. The specific work elements included archival research, field survey, informant and property owner interviews, photography, completion of Iowa Site Inventory forms, and preparation of the project end products. Local volunteers participated in all phases of the project. The photography was shot in November 1997 and field-survey work was conducted in March through June of 1998. Historic research, informant interviews, evaluation, and volunteer training were conducted throughout the project.

In addition to the contracted work for this first phase, the consultant participated in an evening workshop focusing on historic preservation in Perry. Sponsored by the Heartland Heritage Center, this program drew 60 participants on June 25, 1998. The program began with Larry Ericsson and a presentation of several of his firm's historic preservation projects. Will Page then conducted a workshop. Eight historic buildings in Perry were featured--including residential and commercial properties. Workshop participants adjourned to break-out groups to analyze their architectural style and history. The workshop concluded with representatives from each of the break-out groups reporting back their findings to the plenary session. This workshop was video-taped by Perry's cable television service for public rebroadcast.

The reconnaissance survey embraced the area bounded by Pattee Street on the north, 3rd Street on the east, the corner of Estella Street and Railroad Street on the south, and the railroad tracks and First Avenue on the west. (See Figure H-a.) This area included virtually all the historic commercial properties in Perry. Determinations were then made as to what resources within that area possessed sufficient integrity and significance to for National Register eligibility. From an analysis of field data and historic contexts, a series of individual resources and an historic district were identified. Figure H-b shows the recommended boundaries of that historic district. Each of the approximately four dozen resources within that district and the individual resources were intensively surveyed. Those properties excluded from the intensive survey lacked sufficient integrity of significance (under the identified historic contexts) for consideration.

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In 1999 the City of Perry applied for and received a grant-in-aid from the Certified Local Government program, as administered by the SHSI and coordinated by the PHPC, to prepare National Register of Historic Places nominations for the Downtown Perry Historic District and two individual properties in Perry. Hometown Perry (the new styling of the Heartland Heritage Center) provided a cash match for this project. The PHPC selected the Jones Business College at 1305 Otley Avenue and Bruce's Snowball Market at 921 Railroad Street for the individual nominations. This project began in November of 1999 and concluded in August 2000.

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to thank the members of the Perry County Historic Preservation Commission for their help throughout the life of this project. They have included Charlotte Van Cleave, Chair, Alexa McDowell, Chair, Arlene Hamman, Paul Maddy, Mavis Struyk, Max Wheelwright, Carma Wilson, and David Copenhaver. Volunteer efforts have been central to the life of this project, and the quality of their efforts is hard to overestimate. In 1998 professional photographer Jon Jamison of Perry provided the excellent black and white photographs of each surveyed building using the Thanksgiving holiday (when little automobile parking obstructed downtown buildings) to shoot the film. David Wright obtained copies of the Dallas County Assessor's Office property record cards for each building in the downtown. These cards contain essential information about the building materials, size, and legal description. Van Cleave worked extensively on the Iowa Site Inventory forms, solicited information from property owners, and researched historic telephone directories and other sources of information to document the many businesses, which have operated in downtown Perry. Hamman brought to the project a number of years of newspaper research, including four scrapbooks of clippings concerning commercial developments in Perry. Maddy and Hamman assisted in the pedestrian survey of brick, mortar, and trim materials. McDowell shot the black and white and color slide photography for phase two of the project. McDowell and Van Cleave provided project coordination.

Thanks are also due to the staff of the State Historical Society of Iowa, specifically to Dr. Lowell J. Soike, who coordinated the project for the Society.

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE IDENTIFICATION, EVALUATION, REGISTRATION, AND TREATMENT ACTIVITIES

This report recommends that future research on downtown Perry address on the following topics:

- Research should continue to undercover additional information about the Perry Brick and Tile Factory. This might lead to the identification of additional commercial buildings in downtown Perry constructed of building materials manufactured by the firm.
- Research should continue to identify and uncover biographical data about the contractor-builders of Perry, and other building contracting firms, who have worked in Perry. This research will help flesh out the contributions of these individuals and firms to the community's built environment.
- Research should continue to document the planning and construction of fraternal lodge halls in Perry. These organizations had the propensity for building one-room commercial buildings of 3-stories. Lodges in other cities of comparable size in Iowa typically built commercial blocks. What historical factors played in Perry to account for this variation?
- The "Architectural Resources" chapter of this document noted the preference for investment capital to build large commercial buildings in Perry. This phenomenon should be research and explored. Does this phenomenon relate to outside capital investing in commercial real estate in Perry. If so, what are the particulars?
- The construction of the Breed Block, located at 1202-1216 2nd Street, was the largest building ever constructed in downtown Perry. It required large amounts of capital. The developer, Allen Breed, was a local banker. It seems reasonable to suppose that he sought outside investment capital for this big project. Further research should attempt to identify those outside sources and uncover information about such

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institutions or individuals.

- Although time consuming, future research might document the 32 city lots in Perry given to the Des Moines & Fort Dodge railroad as an enticement to locate their line through Perry. This research might uncover the methods the railroad used to dispose of this land and what effects, if any, these methods had on town building in Perry.

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BOUNDARIES OF RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY

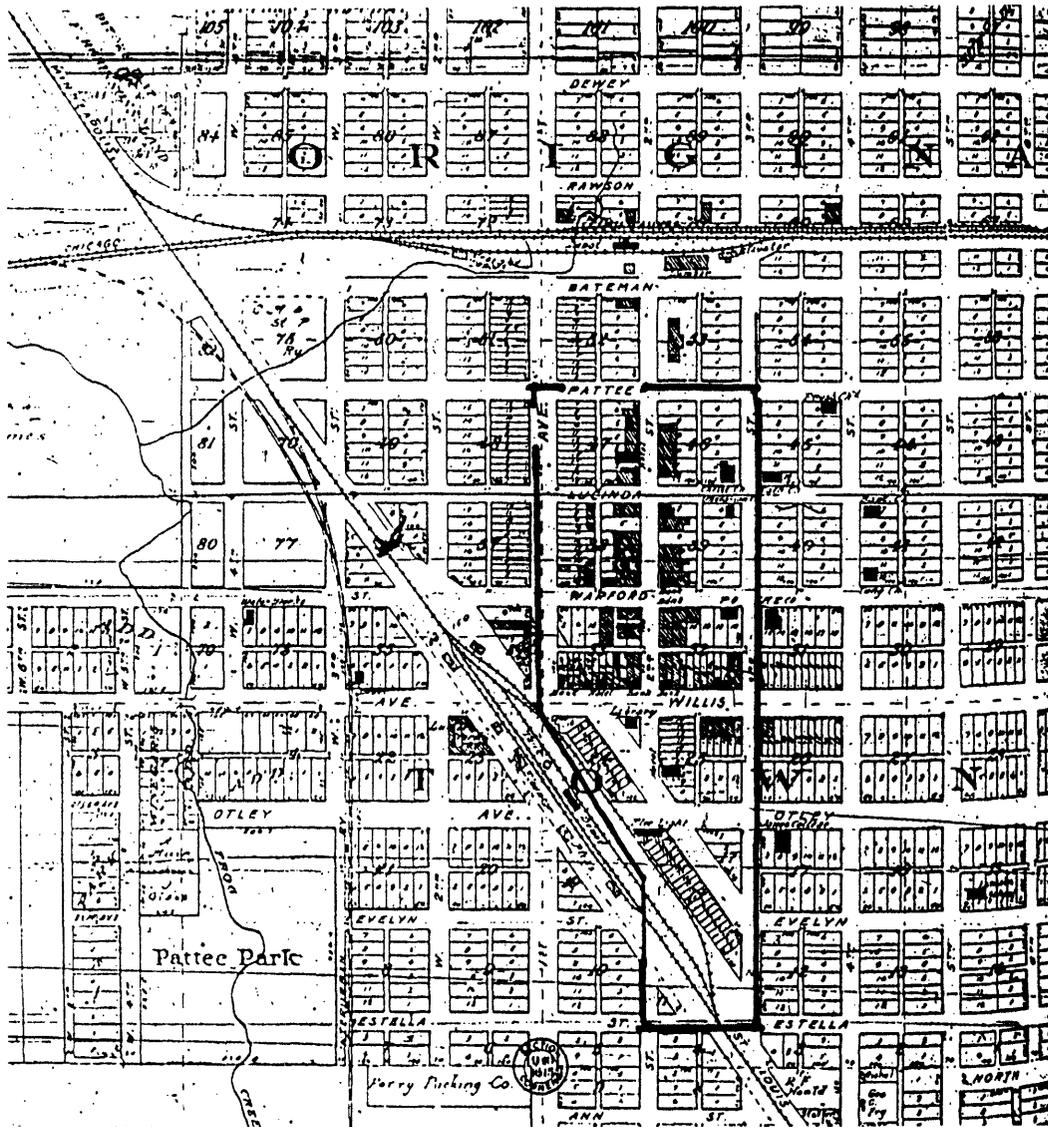


Figure H-a

Source: *Atlas of Dallas County, Iowa, 1916.*

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RECOMMENDED HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

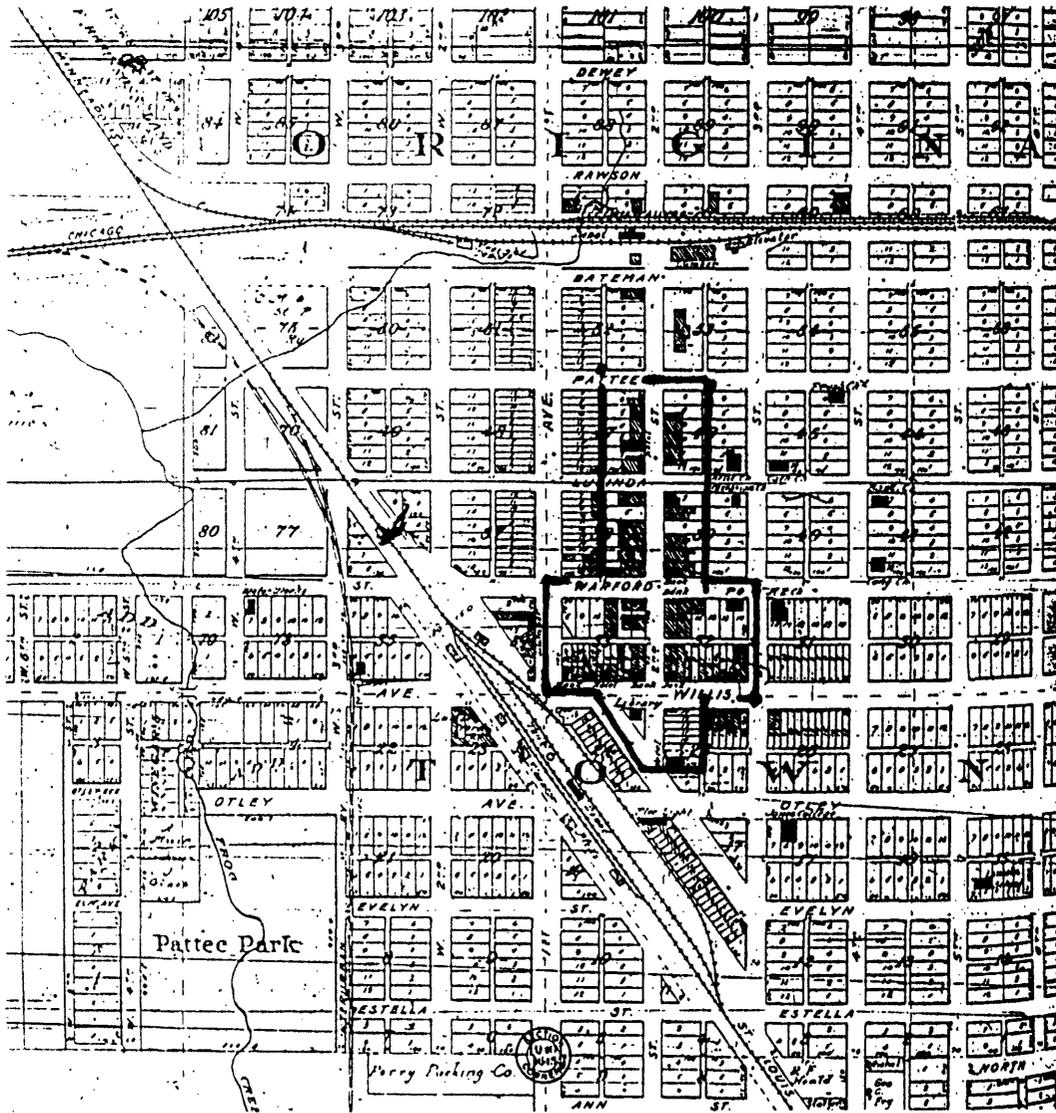


Figure H-b

Source: *Atlas of Dallas County, Iowa, 1916.*

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